

**Does the Employment Environment Further Disable
People with Disabilities?**

A study of selected Christchurch employers and
their perspectives of the employment
situation for people with disabilities.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the employment experiences of people with disabilities and focused specifically on the service industries. In the research (predominantly overseas based) it has been noted that people with disabilities generally have greater difficulties obtaining and retaining employment and so are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed. Many factors contribute to this situation, but of particular interest to this study were the attitudes and behaviour of employers. Attitudes seemed to vary according to the type of disability and whether or not the employer had had experience of employing people with disabilities. Those with negative attitudes tended to behave in a more discriminatory manner. The discrimination shown to people with disabilities who seek employment has led to the recognition that they are part of what has been termed minority groups. Those groups will hopefully benefit from anti-discrimination legislation such as the Human Rights Act 1993.

By means of a questionnaire, a selection of Christchurch employers were surveyed to see what the employment situation was for people with disabilities. The major findings were as follows.

In relation to the attitude factors, employers with experience of employing people with disabilities generally displayed more positive attitudes

than did those with no experience. Significantly more employers with experience expressed a greater willingness to employ people with disabilities, had incorporated disability into Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies, and were prepared to make modification to the workplace. However, there was little difference in the ratings given by employers regarding the importance of certain selection criteria, indicating that employers placed great importance on the selection criteria. Although not significant, attitudes were also found to vary according to the type of disability (obvious versus non-obvious) in relation to the position held by the employee with a disability. So those with obvious disabilities were less likely to have jobs which required face-to-face and phone contact with customers, clients or the public.

General information on the employment of people with disabilities was also obtained. Occupations held by people with disabilities varied between men and women. Women with disabilities were more often in clerical positions, while men worked as technicians, associate professionals, plant and machine assemblers and elementary workers. Larger organisations were found to be more likely to employ people with disabilities.

Even though employers with experience were generally more receptive to employing people with disabilities, some still held negative attitudes. It is fair to say that people with disabilities did experience difficulties in employment as a result of the employment environment. As EEO policies increase and anti-

discrimination legislation is implemented, these problems will hopefully be addressed. However, it will take more than new laws and policies to change the employment situation faced by people with disabilities. Fundamental social, economic and political changes are called for if the constraints which society places on people with disabilities are to be overcome. In the meantime, these constraints have the effect of compounding the disablement of people with disabilities who seek employment.

CHAPTER ONE

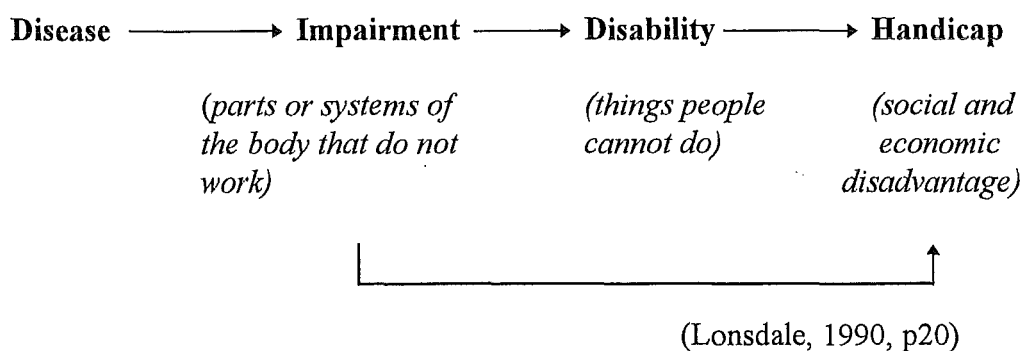
LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Definitions of Disability

It is important to understand what is meant by the various terms used to describe people with disabilities. The most frequently cited and often used definition of disability was outlined by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 1980). This definition distinguishes between the often synonymous concepts, impairment, disability and handicap (refer to figure 1.1). *Impairment* is described as any “ loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function” (WHO, 1980, p 27). A *disability* is defined as “ any restriction on or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform an activity (for example, work or school) in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being” (WHO, 1980, p 28). A *handicap* refers to a “ disadvantage resulting from an impairment or a disability that limits or prevents a role that is normal (depending on age, sex, race and social or cultural factors) for that individual” (WHO, 1980, p 29). For instance, people who are blind lack the function of the eye or optic nerve and consequently are impaired. If these people are then unable, because of their visual limitations, to perform certain tasks at work they are considered disabled. They become handicapped when their blindness is viewed by others in a prejudicial manner.

Most research has defined disability according to the WHO (1980) definition. However, Bertowitz and Hill (1986) have modified the three terms, impairment, disability and handicap to impairment, functional limitation and disability, but have retained the definitional framework provided by the WHO (1980). They suggest that *impairment* results in a person having *functional limitations* such that a physically impaired person would not have the ability to walk, carry or lift objects. This person would be *disabled* if they subsequently found it difficult to perform their expected roles. Put more concisely, Bertowitz and Hill (1986, p4) describe disability as the “loss of ability to perform socially acceptable or prescribed tasks and roles due to a medically definable *condition*.” For them, disability has gone beyond a medical condition circumscribed by the impairment and functional limitation, to something which takes on a wider socioeconomic perspective. In effect, then a person may be functionally limited by their impairment but disabled by their environment.

Figure 1.1. Concepts of Disability - WHO Perspective



Criticism of the WHO and associated definitions of disability is directed at the issues of causation and normalisation. The WHO (1980) definition primarily focuses on the individual and attributes causation to the individual who lacks the ability to function in the surrounding environment. Opponents of the WHO definition argue that disability results from society and social organisations (for example, Abberley, 1987; Oliver, 1986, 1990, 1993; Finkelstein, 1980). A key advocate, Oliver (1990), defines disability as having two components. The first component is *impairment*, which he defines as “lacking part of or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body” (Oliver, 1990, p11). As the WHO critics point out the essential difference between their definition and the WHO definition is that their definition lacks the ‘abnormality of function’ category of the WHO definition. The WHO definition also fails to clarify what normality actually is, let alone how it is influenced by situational and cultural constraints (Oliver, 1990). A second component of *disability* is described as “the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from the mainstream of social activities.” (Oliver, 1990, p11). Oliver's emphasis is on causation resulting from social constructions rather than from the individual's impairment.

The way in which disability is defined is fundamental to the way in which people with disabilities can function within society. Determining just who the

people with disabilities are is an essential component of research and can determine the approach taken to that research. Its impact is felt in every aspect of society including the way in which people with disabilities are viewed as potential and actual employees/employers. To explore this further the two main theories of disability will be considered with particular reference to disability and employment.

1.2. Theories on Disability

Theories on disabilities have developed from two main perspectives, the individualistic and the social. As discussed in the previous section, disability is seen as stemming from either the individual's inability to function because of an impairment, or from society's and social organisations' inability to meet the needs of people with disabilities. These two theories will be explored in relation to the following five models: the charity, medical, social creation, social construction (minority group) and socio-political models. The origins, principles and problems of each model will be discussed with particular reference to their application to disability and employment.

1.2.1. The Individual Theories

1.2.1.1. The Charity Model (or Personal Tragedy Model)

Proponents of this model argue that imbedded in the foundation of society is the notion that disability is a personal tragedy and, therefore, people with disabilities should be treated as victims of tragic events and protected from society. People with disabilities are seen as inferior and unable to function at a socially acceptable level. As a result, they have been traditionally segregated from mainstream society and placed in institutions. To a large extent these institutions have been funded by charity and reliant on a pool of voluntary labour. Nor were there any expectations that people with disabilities should work.

The effect of this attitude was that people with disabilities were forced into a role of dependency and expected to be passive recipients of charity. The language used to describe people with disabilities served to heighten this feeling of dependency. Words such as 'crippled' and 'spastic' were typically used. In the first phase of his social oppression model of disability, Finkelstein (1980) argues that society, from the perspective of the charity ethos, has contributed to the oppression of people with disabilities.

People with disabilities were seen as suffering from a life altering tragedy which left them as incomplete human beings. The perception was that

people with disabilities were unable to function at a 'normal' level as a result of their personal tragedy. Borsay (1986) has taken this argument further by emphasising that, although the so called 'personal troubles' of people with disabilities develop from biological deficiencies, they may result in major abnormalities for the individual. She argues that it is because of 'personal troubles' that the tragic loss and misfortune bestowed on people with disabilities comes to affect their ability to adapt to society.

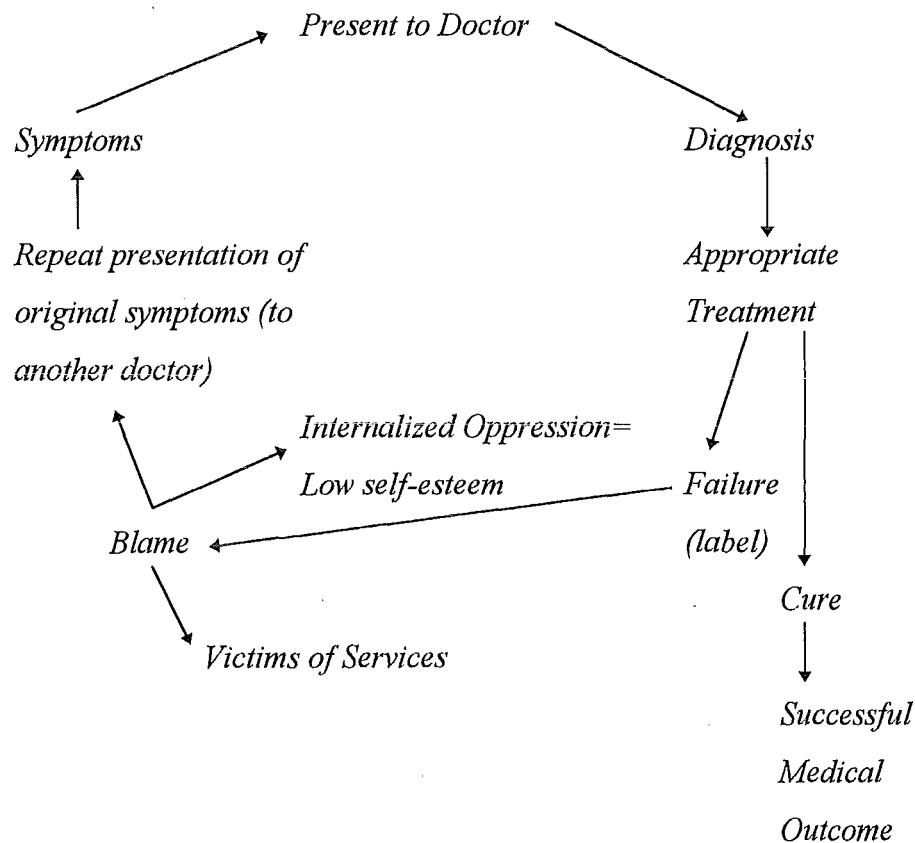
This model portrays disability in a negative light because its prime focus is on the person's disability and the attendant limitations. The perception was that people with disabilities should be protected from the realities of society. Opponents argue that the perceptions of the personal tragedy/charity model penetrate through every aspect of society and are particularly evident in the social policies developed for people with disabilities (Finkelstein, 1980; Oliver, 1986, 1990, 1993). Borsay (1986) has concluded that this model is fundamentally flawed. Firstly, it fails to recognise that people with disabilities are unique individuals with a unique set of responses to their disability and their environment. Secondly, it fails to consider societal factors and the social perspective of disability.

1.2.1.2. The Medical Model (or Clinical Model)

Closely allied to the charity (personal tragedy) model of disability is the medical model. This model focuses on the intervention, diagnosis and treatment

of disability. The perception is that people with disabilities are suffering from an illness or disease and are therefore in need of medical intervention in the form of treatment and rehabilitation. The aim is to restore the lives of people with disabilities to a near 'normal' state, given the constraints of their disability (Johns, 1991). Implicit in this theory is that people with disabilities are abnormal and, because of their disability, are unable to function at the level of their able bodied counterparts. The expectation is that the individual will adapt to the environment rather than the environment will be changed to accommodate the individual (Johns, 1991).

Figure 1.2. Medical Model of Disability



(Gillespie-Sells & Campbell, 1991, p16)

The employment potential of people with disabilities is then restricted by their medically defined disability which limits their ability to function as 'normal' employees. So from the medical perspective paraplegics would not be able to attend a work meeting on the second floor because their disability would prevent them from climbing the flight of stairs.

Through the diagnosis of the disability, the medical model endeavours to list what people with disabilities can and can not do (Gillespie-Sells & Campbell, 1991). In so doing it imposes a restriction on the ability of the disabled person to participate and function adequately in society. The mechanisms of the medical model are neatly summarised in Gillespie-Sells' & Campbells' (1991, p16) illustration replicated in figure 1.2.

The medical model is criticised for having a narrow, inhibited view of disability because it treats disability as the individual's problem (Oliver, 1990; Johns, 1991; Gillespie-Sells & Campbell, 1991; McCarthy, 1988; Brisenden, 1986). Although there is a need for medical intervention it is not the only source through which disability can and should be understood. Opponents argue that the wider social issues must be considered if a full understanding of disability is to be achieved (Oliver, 1990; Johns, 1991; Gillespie-Sells & Campbell, 1991; McCarthy, 1988; Brisenden, 1986).

The short falls of the medical model become apparent when it is applied to the employment setting. McCarthy's (1988) examination of why people with disabilities were potentially unemployed provides an excellent illustration of how the medical model fails to explain disability in relation to employment. In his five-fold explanation of unemployment among the disabled, McCarthy (1988) attributes the high levels of unemployment to the following factors: the individual's functional limitations, poor work motivation, social-skill deficits, occupational-skill deficits and job-search-skill deficits. He found that the high level of unemployment among people with disabilities is a problem which goes beyond the individual's deficiencies to way in which the individual interacts with his/her environment (McCarthy, 1988). The medical model provides only part of the explanation for the high levels of unemployment among the disabled. A more comprehensive analysis emerges from examining the social environment.

1.2.2. The Social Theories

The proponents of the social theories developed their theories to counter the individual theories of disability. They attributed disablement to society and the social environment rather than to the individual. Their inspiration came from the disability movements who advocated equal rights rather than charity. Proponents of the social theories have challenged the basic concepts of disability and the fundamental structures and policies around which disability has been centred. In essence, the social theorists refute the individual perspective of

disability on the grounds that it fails to recognise any socially constructed problems that exist within the environment (Lunt & Thornton, 1994). They argue that disability is constructed by the environment, (Finkelstein, 1980; Abberley, 1987; Oliver, 1986, 1993; Lunt & Thornton, 1994) which includes the physical environment (for example, the building layouts), the attitudes of individuals, organisational dimensions and work practices (Lunt & Thornton, 1994).

1.2.2.1. Social Creation Model

The three social models of disability all vary slightly, with causation being the main differentiating factor. In the social creation model, the primary cause of disability was identified as stemming from the institutionalised practices of society (Oliver, 1990; Oliver & Barnes, 1993). Despite policies designed to counter discrimination, negative individual and social attitudes persist. According to Oliver (1990), discriminatory practices are embedded in the institutionalised practices of society and consequently are reflected in its policies and practices.

This model places firm emphasis on society and social organisation as the primary source of disablement. Borsay (1986) describes this as the 'interpretative' dimension of her social model, with impairment being created from the expectations and values which society imposed on people with disabilities. In turn these lead to social inequalities where people with

disabilities are disadvantaged, poor and powerless. As a result of society's institutionalised practices people with disabilities are oppressed and dependent on the non-disabled population (Finkelstein, 1980).

In essence, society has failed to meet the needs of people with disabilities because of the barriers which it has created. The barriers in employment have developed from factors such as business cycles, welfare laws and disincentives and, frequently, a lack of physical access (Johns, 1991). Oliver (1990) argues that a disablist society creates disabled people because discrimination is institutionalised.

1.2.2.2. Social Constructionist Model

From a social constructionist perspective the problems of disability stem from the perceptions and actions of non-disabled people. Prejudice towards people with disabilities arises from negative attitudes (both individual and social) and the attitude that disability is a personal tragedy. These attitudes filter through into the social policies and result in people with disabilities being disadvantaged by their social environment (Oliver, 1990).

Much of the research on employment has attributed the employment problems faced by people with disabilities to the attitudes of employers. The attitudinal barriers limit the opportunities and employment options for people with disabilities. Parallels have been drawn between the experiences of minority

groups with those of the disabled population. Disadvantages originate from the physical and social environment rather than the individual's impairment (Johns, 1991). McCarthy (1988) acknowledges that attitudes can impose limitations on people with disabilities but suggests that there are also many other issues such as accommodation, access, education and the job market which influence employment opportunities.

1.2.2.3. Socio-Political Model

Viewed in isolation, the social creation and construction views of disability do not provide a complete explanation of disability. Nor do they address the problems faced by people with disabilities. However, if viewed together and with respect to social, economic and political issues, they could enhance the social theorists' understanding of disability and foster change (Oliver, 1990; Oliver & Zarb, 1989; Borsay, 1986; Abberley, 1987). This all encompassing social concept has been called the socio-political model of disability. Its rationale is that disability and its related problems will only be fully understood when social, economic and political spheres within society have been examined.

Central to the economic dimension is the belief that society must be efficient and productive, and to achieve this people must be healthy, independent and innovative (Borsay, 1986; Abberley, 1987). These criteria immediately disadvantage people with disabilities because society deems them

to be unhealthy, dependent and stagnant. Moreover, they often lack the necessary work qualifications and are considered unproductive and unsuitable for the workforce (Borsay, 1986). This becomes a very real problem given the high levels of unemployment and underemployment among the disabled population.

People with disabilities are also disadvantaged by their low social status. They frequently encounter negative attitudes from the non-disabled who discourage further social interactions (Borsay, 1986). Such social limitation only add to the oppression of people with disabilities (Finkelstein, 1980; Oliver, 1986, 1990). Social status is defined by society's expectations of adulthood and an important component of this is employment. For people with disabilities employment is often not an easy option and frequently not expected of them.

To bring about change people with disabilities must become politically aware and active (Oliver, 1990; Borsay, 1986; Abberley, 1987). They need to assert pressure on agents of change by raising the awareness of their oppression and by focusing on the means by which change can be affected. People with disabilities must seek empowerment. One way of achieving this is through policies which alleviate, rather than compensate for, disablement, such as redesigning the work environment to accommodate people of all abilities (Oliver, 1990; Lunt & Thornton, 1994).

1.3. Employment Statistics

In part, the employment statistics on people with disabilities describes their employment status. It is common for people with disabilities to experience a high level of unemployment and underemployment (Clark & Hirst, 1989; Barnes, 1992; Glendinning, 1991; Lunt & Thornton, 1994) and this is reinforced by the statistics from New Zealand, Britain and America. Despite the difficulties associated with measuring the number of people with disabilities who are in or seeking employment, current employment statistics are a useful guideline. In the following section employment trends will be outlined and discussed with reference to their implications for people with disabilities.

1.3.1. Levels of Unemployment

1.3.1.1. Britain

In Britain the estimated disabled workforce is around 1,272,000 or just over three percent of the total workforce (Barnes, 1992). The level of employment within the disabled workforce is significantly lower than that for the non-disabled workforce. It is estimated that about 30 percent of men with disabilities are in paid employment, compared to 78 percent of non-disabled men (Lonsdale, 1990). Similarly, the percentage of women with disabilities in paid employment (29%) is dramatically lower than that for their non-disabled counterparts (60%) (Lonsdale, 1990). These figures highlight the gap between

the employment levels of the disabled and non-disabled in the working age population.

The lower rate of employment for people with disabilities is in turn reflected in their higher rate of unemployment. A 1985 British labour force survey revealed that the overall unemployment rate was 10.7 percent, but for people with disabilities the rate of unemployment was 23.4 percent (Lonsdale, 1990). Barnes (1992) found that although they wanted to work, 22 percent of the disabled population were unemployed, with higher levels of unemployment among school leavers and the over 50 age group.

1.3.1.2. United States of America

America was estimated to have between 20-36 million people with disabilities,¹ of which 13.1 million were of working age and able to work in open employment (Parent & Everson, 1986). In reality, however, many were out of work, the percentage estimated to be around 50-75 (Parent & Everson, 1986). More recent calculations estimate that there are about 42 million people with disabilities (Friedman, 1993). A national poll taken between 1986-87 found that, despite wanting to work, the majority of people with physical, sensory and mental disabilities were not working (Friedman, 1993).

¹ Disability was defined in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act 1973 which covers a wide range of disabilities, including disabilities such as mental retardation, alcoholism, cancer and spinal cord injury.

Further evidence of the gap between the employment of the disabled and non-disabled was illustrated in a study of people with visual impairment and blindness (Dunham, 1979). This study found that only 32 percent of those with visual impairment/blindness, as opposed to 72 percent of those with no impairments, were in the labour force. This is in line with the findings of a 1986 study where unemployment was estimated to be about 70 percent for people described as 'employable blind individuals' (Friedman, 1993). Even more dramatic is the contrast between the employment levels of visually impaired/blind and non-visually impaired/blind men and women. Dunham (1979) estimated the level of employment to be 87 percent for non-impaired males which contrasted with 47 percent for males with visual impairment/blindness. For females the figures stood at 58 percent and 17 percent respectively (Dunham, 1979).

1.3.1.3. New Zealand

In New Zealand the estimated level of employment for people with disabilities is high. Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL, 1990) estimated that there were 228,800 people aged 15-59 with disabilities, who made up 11.4 percent of the working age population (Stroombergen, Miller & Jensen, 1991). They estimated that the level of labour force participation² for people with disabilities was 89.5 percent for men and 73.8 percent for women

² The labour force participation rate refers to those aged between 15-59 years who worked at least one hour per week in paid employment, as well as unemployed people who are actively seeking or about to start work.

(Stroombergen et al., 1991). This estimate was based on the general labour force participation rates. Judging by overseas research these figures appear to be high.

On a smaller scale, two regional studies, one in Christchurch (Kittingham, 1981) and one in Wellington (Bascand, 1987) found that people with disabilities represented 1.9 percent of the total workforce. Of the firms surveyed, Bascand (1987) found 57 percent of the employees with disabilities were male and 43 percent were female. By contrast, Kittingham (1981) found the number of males employees with disabilities was considerably higher at 79 percent than the 21 percent for females. While these studies provide some idea of the employment patterns of people with disabilities their applicability to the whole population is limited by their small sample size.

Despite the desire to work, it would appear that people with disabilities find it more difficult to obtain work than do their non-disabled counterparts. This is reflected in a higher unemployment rate for people with disabilities. In March 1990 the level of unemployment for people with disabilities was 21.9 percent, as opposed to a national unemployment rate of 7.3 percent (Stroombergen et al., 1991). More specifically, 37.6 percent of women and 9.6 percent of men with disabilities were estimated to be unemployed (Stroombergen et al., 1991).

1.3.1.4. Unemployment Trends

These statistics clearly show the comparatively higher level of unemployment for people with disabilities than that for the general population. However, such statistics should be interpreted with caution. Studies which endeavour to estimate the percentage of people with disabilities in the population differ depending on what criteria are used to define disability. As discussed in section 1.1, opinions differ as to what constitutes a disability and so the interpretation of statistics may vary accordingly. Additional factors also impact on statistics, such as the different age classifications of the working population. The onset and severity of the disability also affects whether or not the person is included in the employment figures. So in America, those women with disabilities who had worked prior to their disability had a greater chance of re-employment (Vash, 1982).

In addition to the high level of unemployment, people with disabilities also tend to spend more time unemployed. New Zealand estimates in 1991 found 55.6 percent of people with disabilities had been unemployed for six months or more, which is a considerably higher than the 43.4 percent of non-disabled people (BERL, 1991). Several British studies during the 1980s found that, when compared to the non-disabled, three times as many people with disabilities were likely to remain unemployed for at least two years (Barnes, 1992).

1.3.2. Rates of Underemployment

To compound their employment problems further, people with disabilities are often employed in positions which do not truly reflect their skills and ability, a situation referred to as underemployment. In fact many people with disabilities are working in low skilled, poorly paid positions, which lack any job security and promotional opportunity (Bowe, 1978; Barnes, 1992; McCarthy, 1988; Jamero, 1979). Typically, those with disabilities are employed as seasonal workers, routine office workers, cleaners and general labourers (Barnes, 1992).

Based on the type of work done, the labour market can be divided into primary and secondary sectors. The primary sector covers jobs which are described as requiring a high level of skill, which is in turn recognised by the high wages, good working conditions, job security and promotional opportunities offered (Barnes, 1992). Typical examples of workers in this sector are lawyers, engineers, teachers, accountants and doctors. By contrast, jobs in the secondary labour sector usually require a far lower level of skill and, consequently, offer lower wages, poorer conditions and fewer opportunities for promotion (Barnes, 1992). Examples include catering, general labouring, factory and cleaning positions.

Many of those with disabilities are employed in the secondary sector of the labour market. A British study, cited by Barnes (1992), confirmed this pattern, with 25 percent of the people with disabilities employed in semi-skilled positions as opposed to 16 percent of the non-disabled. Only 12 percent of people with disabilities were employed in professional or managerial positions in contrast to the 21 percent of non-disabled employees. Further evidence of this trend was found in another study where only half as many men with disabilities, as compared to non-disabled men, held professional and managerial positions and most of the women with disabilities were employed in routine clerical and service sector jobs (Barnes, 1992). Jamero (1979) concluded that, of the disabled who are employed in the open labour market, 63 percent received incomes at or below the poverty level. Underemployment is therefore very much a reality for people with disabilities and must be addressed.

1.4. Disability and Discrimination

The disproportionately high number of unemployed and underemployed people with disabilities inevitably raises the issue of discrimination. With the greater awareness of the barriers impinging on people with disabilities comes an increasing quest to understand and explain these limitations. As the foundations on which disability is explained move from an individual perspective to a social viewpoint, the question of discrimination emerges as the causal explanation and

with it the need to explore the attitudinal and social barriers to employment (Stubbins, 1988; Johns, 1991; Barnes, 1992; Oliver & Barnes, 1993).

Discrimination is a form of prejudice where, because of qualities unique to the particular group, its members are distinguished from other people and treated differently. Usually, discrimination has an adverse effect on those who are members of the group.³ As described by Johnson (1986, p 243), prejudice is "an adverse or hostile attitude towards a person who belongs to a group, simply because he/she belongs to that group and is therefore presumed to have objectionable qualities ascribed to that group." Discrimination in employment typically involves people being disadvantaged in economic, social and political ways. Important expressions of discrimination are seen in the unemployment and underemployment of people with disabilities, to which the discriminatory practices of employers attribute.

Discrimination manifests itself in direct and indirect ways. Direct discrimination is overt in nature and presents itself through prejudiced behaviour and attitudes, which in turn result in greater employment inequalities for people with disabilities (Lonsdale, 1990; Hunt, 1990; Johns, 1991; Lunt & Thornton, 1994). If an individual is treated differently because of his/her disability then that is discrimination. By contrast, indirect discrimination emerges from the inclusion of apparently neutral attitudes and assumptions into rules, policies and

³ In this instance discrimination is taken in its perjorative sense.

practices (Hahn, 1988; Johns, 1991; Barnes, 1992; Oliver & Barnes, 1993; Lunt & Thornton, 1994). The language used by welfare agencies often describes people with disabilities as dependent on and in need of care (Oliver & Barnes, 1993). For example, people often talk about caring for people with disabilities in the community, and this is also reflected by the names given to programmes such as attendant care and alternative care. More specifically, an example of indirect discrimination is the employer who rejects those individuals who did not have a full drivers licence, even though it was not a requirement of the job. Such discrimination would inevitably cull those people with disabilities.

Recognition of discrimination is enhanced further by the move away from the individual theories' explanation of disability to that presented by the social theories. From a social theorist's perspective, it is the barriers within the individual's environment which are disabling, not the individual's impairment. Barnes (1992) suggests that a society which disables people is, by nature, also discriminatory. Furthermore, a very complex process of discrimination emerges from a society which institutionalises discrimination (Barnes, 1992, Oliver & Barnes, 1993). The segregation of people with disabilities into sheltered employment is but one of many examples.

In employment, discriminatory practices manifest themselves in a number of different ways. Johnson (1986) presented an interesting analysis of the sources of discrimination in the labour market when he suggested that they

originate from economic discrimination caused by prejudice, statistical discrimination and monopsonistic exploitation. Economic discrimination exists when individuals of equal productivity are offered different jobs or different wages because they belong to a minority group which is exposed to and experiences discrimination (Johnson, 1986). Johnson (1986) suggests that people with disabilities experience prejudice because employers prefer not to employ workers from minority groups. This form of discrimination is thought to vary with the type, severity and visibility of a person's impairment. Prejudice is found to be greater when the disability is more severe and visible (Hahn, 1985; Johnson, 1986; Glendinning, 1991).

A second source of discrimination was described as statistical and referred to the information base on which employers make decisions about people with disabilities. In essence, Johnson (1986) found that employers perceived people with disabilities as unproductive and therefore as a liability or cost to a company. Such beliefs were thought to originate from the following pre-set selection standards: level of education, previous work experience and high scores on pre-employment tests, all of which were deemed to be accurate predictors of work productivity. Even though this information may be misleading and inaccurate employers still use it as a base on which to make employment decisions. Studies have found that people with disabilities are six times more likely to receive a negative response when applying for a job,

whereas non-disabled people are 1.5 times more likely to receive a positive response (Barnes, 1992).

Monopsonistic exploitation is a form of discrimination which results from a lack of competition in the labour market and leads to employers having power over people with disabilities (Johnson, 1986). This power is reflected by the lower wages being offered to people with disabilities (Johnson, 1986; Glendinning, 1991) and their vulnerability to changes in the market place. The effects of economic recession during the 1980s saw people with disabilities become surplus to labour requirements, a fact reflected in the high unemployment figures (Kuh, D., & Lawrence, C., Tripp., & Creber, G., 1988; Glendinning, 1991).

There can be little dispute that discrimination exists, although in nature it varies from place to place, and time to time. Even when employers claim to be receptive to the suggestion of employing people with disabilities there is still evidence of discrimination. A British study by Morrell (1990) found that 75 percent of the employers interviewed were adamant that they would not discriminate against people with disabilities (cited in Barnes, 1992, p 63). However, the majority of employers managed to justify not hiring people with disabilities because they foresaw problems such as the unsuitability of their premises and work. There was also a lack of disabled applicants. This type of covert discrimination was described by Barnes (1992) as legitimate

discrimination. Employers are not outrightly rejecting people with disabilities. Rather they are disguising their discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in what are perceived to be more tangible and acceptable avenues.

1.4.1. Disability as a Minority Group

The employment experiences of people with disabilities resemble those of other minority groups such as women and blacks. Common to all of these groups are the experiences of prejudice, discriminatory language, unemployment, underemployment, and unusually low socio-economic status (Johns, 1991). There is dependency, low self-esteem and undervalued achievements (Johns, 1991). Given these similarities, there is an increasing tendency to equate disability with minority group issues. However, before people with disabilities can be considered a part of minority groups, additional factors must be addressed.

Appearance is an important trait and one which sets people with disabilities apart from other minority groups (Hahn, 1985; Morris, 1993). People with disabilities can be differentiated by their physical or behavioural differences. Hahn (1985) argues that it is these differences that result in discrimination. Typically, disability has been viewed as the effect of functional limitations and the creation of biologically inferior people. To date, the main focus has been on the normalisation of people with disabilities and adaptation to

their environment. However, from a social theorist's perspective, it is society's attitudes which create limitations on people with disabilities and these then filter through into the policies and practices of society and the social environment (Hahn, 1985).

People with disabilities who already experience discrimination on the grounds of age, race or gender are thought to be doubly disadvantaged. Where discrimination is experienced on more than one level it is commonly termed double discrimination (Barnes, 1992). For example, discrimination is compounded for disabled black people, disabled women, disabled lesbians and those of other minority groups. Discrimination on the grounds of age is thought to be disproportionately greater for people with disabilities than for the non-disabled (Barnes, 1992). Similarly, women with disabilities, as compared to men with disabilities, tend to be over-represented in clerical and service work but under-represented in managerial and administrative work (Russo and Jansen, 1988).

Pfeiffer (1991) examined the socio-economic characteristics of people with disabilities to determine what effects they had on employment status and income. Discrimination analysis indicated that, as in the non-disabled population, disabled males were more likely to be employed and receive higher incomes than were women with disabilities and other disabled minority groups

(Pfeiffer, 1991). Pfeiffer (1991) attributed this trend to both society's and the individual's practices of discrimination towards people with disabilities.

The interaction between gender, disability and discrimination is complex. The image of masculinity is strength, physical ability, autonomy and authority. However, the image created by a disabled person in a wheelchair is one of dependency and lack of autonomy (Morris, 1993). By contrast, femininity and disability share common elements such as dependency and passivity, but the image of disability is incongruous with the expectation of women as mothers, wives and homemakers (Morris, 1993). In her thought provoking analysis, Morris (1993) challenges the over simplified comparison between, on the one hand, discrimination on the grounds of disability, and on the other hand, race, gender and age. Her focus is on the social oppression of people with disabilities and on how this is intertwined with the concepts of masculinity and femininity.

1.4.2. Policies on Disability

Equal employment opportunities' policies and anti-discrimination legislation seek to redress the employment imbalance experienced by people with disabilities. At a national level, British, American and New Zealand governments have developed legislation to protect the disabled employee. To meet the demands of this legislation, organisations have implemented policies based on the practices of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action.

1.4.2.1. Equal Employment Opportunities and Affirmative Action

The principles behind equal employment opportunity (EEO) are designed to encourage employers to make employment decisions based on the individual's skills, ability and knowledge rather than on his/her gender, race or disability. An EEO policy on disability is somewhat more complex than one based on race or gender because equal treatment goes beyond redressing attitudinal discrimination, and more towards restructuring the whole work environment. Employers are expected to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities (Johns, 1991). For example, they should be prepared to modify the height of a work bench to accommodate a person in a wheelchair.

Often described as reverse discrimination, affirmative action programmes go beyond EEO programmes by actively encouraging discrimination in *favour* of people with disabilities. Affirmative action programmes are based on the premise that minority group members face discrimination in employment and, in order to redress this imbalance, employers must actively hire these people. Some countries have gone so far as to develop quota systems which set in place a minimum employment level for people with disabilities (discussed at length in the following section).

Each country approaches the problems of discrimination in a different way, as do the various organisations within a country. Just as discrimination is

shaped by the attitudes and behaviour of individuals towards people with disabilities so, too, is anti-discrimination legislation. Changes in the focus of the attitudes and behaviour of employers matches changes in anti-discrimination legislation.

The following section outlines the various ways in which Britain, U.S.A. and New Zealand have addressed the issues surrounding disability and employment and the associated problems of discrimination.

1.4.2.2. Disability Legislation and Anti-discrimination Laws

Britain

In 1943 the Tomlinson Committee was set up to investigate the rehabilitation and resettlement of disabled people. The committee's recommendations were enacted in the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944 (with slight amendments in 1958). This Act addressed a number of issues surrounding the employment of people with disabilities. The most noteworthy provisions included the disabled persons employment register and the quota system.

Under the Act, a disabled persons' employment register was established. A number of advantages were offered to people with disabilities who joined the register. For example, those who registered were protected against unreasonable dismissal. However, the advantages of registering as a disabled

person diminished as the laws covering employment changed to include all employees (Kettle & Massie, 1986). As a result the number of people on the register also declined from 936,196 in the 1950s to as few as 366,768 in 1989 (Barnes, 1992).

Registered disabled people formed the basis of the quota scheme which was designed to target employers with 20 or more employees. The quota scheme required employers to employ at least 3 percent of their workforce from the disabled persons' employment register (Guest, 1979; Stubbins, 1982; Kettle & Massie, 1986; Barnes, 1992). In special cases employers who, for legitimate reasons were unable to meet the 3 percent quota, could apply to have it reduced. Similarly, employers could make an application to have a non-registered disabled person count as part of the company's quota. It was considered an offence to break the provisions of this Act and employers were liable for a maximum fine of 100 pounds (set in 1944).

The success of this Act has been limited, mainly because it has not been enforced and the impact of the quota scheme has been limited. As a result, it has had little impact on the employment of people with disabilities. The majority of employers have chosen to disregard the minimal requirements of the quota scheme. This is evident in the private sector where two thirds of the companies had not met the 3 percent quota by the late 1970s (Barnes, 1992, p68). Added to this only 10 employers have ever been prosecuted under this

Act, and only two have received the maximum fine of 100 pounds (Barnes, 1992, p68). The Companies Act 1980 was also unsuccessful in getting companies with more than 250 employees to publish information about their policies for employing people with disabilities.

The British government is currently relying on the Manpower Services Commission's publication of a "Code of Good Practice on the Employment of Disabled People" (Kettle & Massie, 1986). This document is in two parts and outlines the codes for good employer practices. The first section deals with making policies and setting objectives for employing people with disabilities. The second part outlines how to effectively implement these policies and provides a practical guide to day-to-day employment matters.

America

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 1990 is the most recent and significant piece of legislation governing the treatment of people with disabilities. It prohibits discrimination in employment as well as in public services, transportation, public accommodation and telecommunications. The Act states that employers must provide *reasonable accommodation* for employees with disabilities provided this does not result in *undue hardship* for the company (Hunsicker, 1990; Cascio, 1991). Furthermore, if the disabled applicant fulfils the *essential requirements* of the job and the firm would not

encounter undue hardship, then the employer is legally obliged to accommodate this person (Lunt & Thornton, 1994).

Reasonable accommodation covers a range of issues such as job restructuring, permitting part-time or modified work schedules, and the acquisition of new equipment (Hunsicker, 1990). The ADA states that accommodation is unreasonable when it results in undue hardship to the employer. Undue hardship is simply defined as 'significant difficulty or expense' which is determined by the nature and cost of accommodation in relation to the organisation's size, structure and budget (Hunsicker, 1990). This Act is positive because it addresses, not only direct discrimination, but also indirect discrimination by forcing employers to make reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities (Oliver & Barnes, 1993; Lunt & Thornton, 1994). It also recognises the social dimension of disability by seeking to instigate change from within the environment, rather than from within the individual (Lunt & Thornton, 1994).

The ADA covers a wide range of people with disabilities, from those whose disabilities are readily discernible to those with less obvious disabilities. Conditions which are commonly classified as disabilities (for example, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and blindness) are covered by the ADA, as well as conditions such as AIDS. Individuals with AIDS or the AIDS virus are protected by the Act. Smith (1993) believes that the number of people with AIDS will escalate

in the next decade and therefore companies must have cultures which are sensitive to the needs of HIV-positive employees.

Although the Act spans a range of important issues concerning the discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, its key terms are not clearly or concisely defined. As a result, there is likely to be confusion among users of the Act (Hunsicker, 1990). For example, the Act states that discrimination is prohibited if the employee or applicant can perform the "essential" functions of the job with reasonable proficiency (Hunsicker, 1990). However, the ADA provides no guidelines for determining which functions are "essential."

New Zealand

There is very little legislation in New Zealand which deals specifically with disability in relation to employment. The Human Rights Act 1993 made discrimination on the grounds of disability illegal as from February 1994. The Act applies to discrimination in employment and states that discrimination results when employers fail to 'reasonably accommodate' people with disabilities. An example of such discrimination would be the failure to install a ramp to enable people in wheelchairs to gain entry to the workplace. Obviously what may be reasonably accommodated for one employer may not be so for another and, in fact, may result in 'undue hardship.' Undue hardship is described as a situation which places unreasonable demands on the employer.

Accommodation which is excessively expensive or disruptive may be so described. The Act is very recent and as yet little is known about its impact on discrimination in employment.

Organisations are expected to initiate and install anti-discrimination measures for employees with disabilities. In recent years a growing number of organisations have implemented EEO policies. However, these policies usually apply to discrimination on the grounds of race and gender, and less frequently disability. The state sector services are required to develop EEO programmes which recognise the employment requirements of people with disabilities.

1.5. Attitudes towards People with Disabilities

1.5.1. The Origins of Attitudes

Attitudes are shaped by the interaction of internal and external factors on people and result in a wide range of attitudes being held between and within different groups of people. These attitudes are formed by information, emotions and actions (Bowe, 1978). Information refers to the amount of knowledge of a topic, emotions reflect a person's feelings, likes and dislikes, and actions are the situational determinants (Bowe, 1978).

In one of his earlier articles, Livneh (1982) identified twelve major categories from which he believed negative attitudes towards people with

disabilities originated. Included in his list were socio-cultural elements that conditioned people to think negatively about disability. For instance, the importance placed on beauty and appearance sets standards by which to judge people. Livneh (1982) also suggested a minority group comparability category, as well as disability related factors, childhood influences, psychodynamic mechanisms, punishment for a sin, aesthetic aversion, a reminder of death, prejudice, demographic variables, personality variables and anxiety-provoking categories. Of the disability-related factors, Livneh (1982) thought that negative attitudes developed from various aspects of disability, such as its level of severity and its degree of visibility. Personality variables such as, anxiety, authority, aggression and self-satisfaction were also associated with attitudes towards people with disabilities (Livneh, 1982).

Livneh's (1988) more recent analysis of the origins of negative attitudes towards people with disabilities presents a six dimensional explanation. This includes the following: socio-cultural-psychological, affective-cognitive, conscious-unconscious, past experience-present situation, internally originated-externally originated and theoretical-empirical dimensions (Livneh, 1988). This explanation builds on Livneh's earlier account by providing a more focused and clearer outline of the sources of negative attitudes towards people with disabilities.

These explanations of attitude formation recognise its complex and intertwined nature. Not only is the individual responsible for shaping attitudes but influences within the social environment are also important. These concepts are in line with the social theorists' views on disability. For example, the internally originated-externally originated dimension focuses on elements of the non-disabled individual, such as demographic or personality factors, as well as those peculiar to the individual with a disability (Livneh, 1988).

The formation of attitudes was also explored by Daniels (1985) who presented three separate explanations for negative attitudes towards people with disabilities. In the first place, she suggested that negative attitudes were caused by individual personality deficiencies and could be generalized to and account for the attitudes of a group. This explanation was limited because it could only account for the attitudes of a small number of individuals (Daniels, 1985). The second source of negative attitudes was thought to develop from a lack of understanding and awareness of disability (Daniels, 1985). Although greater understanding and awareness may dispel myths and attitudes about disability, it may not account for all attitudes. For example, an understanding of the causes and effects of epilepsy does not guarantee that a person will feel comfortable and relaxed when a person has a seizure (Daniels, 1985).

Daniels (1985) presented the 'first-date' syndrome as her third explanation of attitudes towards people with disabilities. She argued that

negative attitudes emerge from feelings of discomfort and uncertainty caused by the unfamiliar situation that arises when disabled and non-disabled people meet for the first time. This situation is seen to disturb the equilibrium set by more familiar social interactions (Daniels, 1985). The first date syndrome is a complex learned response which, if understood, could provide an excellent base for understanding negative attitudes towards people with disabilities (Daniels, 1985).

As mentioned already, attitudes towards people with disabilities are often thought of as negative. Consequently, there is a continual desire to change the attitudes of individuals so that they tend towards the positive extreme. There is no one set definition of what constitutes a positive or a negative attitude because attitudes reflect the current viewpoints on disability and these are continually changing. The most pronounced change in the field of disability is the move away from the individual theories to the social theories. The change has had, and will continue to have, an impact on attitudes towards people with disabilities.

The current issues surrounding disability are reflected in the changing attitudes. This is illustrated by Maka (1988) who compared non-disabled and disabled students' perceptions of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities. She found that disabled students cited the promotion of civil and social rights as the ultimate sign of positive attitudes. By contrast, the non-

disabled student subjects believed that being protective towards people with disabilities and placing them in situations of need was positive. A third group who were labelled as non-disabled individuals with extremely positive attitudes (as judged by the disabled subjects) held opinions which were more in line with the disabled subjects. That is, they did not distinguish people with disabilities as a special category.

By far the majority of the research on disability and employment has focused on the attitudes of employers because this has been seen as the main barrier to employment for people with disabilities. Although the attitudes of employers are important, this is only one aspect of the employment experiences of people with disabilities (McCarthy, 1988). As Bowe (1978) argues, attitudinal barriers are only one of the six barriers facing people with disabilities. Also experienced are transportation, architectural, legal, educational, personal and occupational barriers (Bowe, 1978).

Increasingly, attitudes towards disability are being shaped according to the social theories approach. The attitude of employers is perceived as positive when people with disabilities are treated in an equivalent manner to their non-disabled counterparts. However, attitudes are negative when people with disabilities are treated less favourably than the non-disabled. In a similar way, discrimination against people with disabilities can be compared to the positive-negative attitudes dichotomy.

1.5.2. Research on Employer Attitudes

As discussed previously, people with disabilities tend to be more likely than the non-disabled to experience unemployment and underemployment. This trend cannot be explained by any one single factor. Rather, it is a combination of factors which limit the employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Bowe (1978) argues that people with disabilities face barriers not only in employment but in all aspects of life through architectural, attitudinal, educational, legal, occupational and personal barriers, all of which are inextricably intertwined. Bowe (1978) goes so far as to suggest that attitudinal barriers are the most fundamental and underlie all the others. Although some would contest this point, it highlights the deep seated origins of attitudes and their effects on society, social organisations and employment.

The gap between the perceived and the actual hiring practices of employers can be partially attributed to the attitudes of employers. The literature recognises this gap in that there are more employers who are willing to hire people with disabilities than do actually hire them (Colorez and Geist, 1987; Wilgosh and Skaret, 1987). In a study cited by Barnes (1992, p63), 75 percent of employers stated that they would consider employing people with disabilities. However, the majority believed that in reality there would be a number of limiting factors. For example, 68 percent felt that there were no suitable jobs in their firm, 61 percent perceived there was a lack of disabled job

applicants, and 52 percent cited unsuitable work premises (Barnes, 1992). On the surface these limiting factors could be changed by modifying the attitudes of employers from a negative to a positive focus. However, these factors may be more deeply rooted in society and, as Barnes (1992) suggests, may be expressions of legitimate discrimination.

Attitudes continue to inhibit people with disabilities beyond the difficulties experienced in the selection processes and decisions. As has been frequently mentioned the underemployment of people with disabilities is an important issue and is partly a reflection of negative employer attitudes (Barnes, 1992; Tse, 1994). Not only do people with disabilities face limited job selection opportunities but once in a position they often find it difficult to progress further up the career ladder. Employers frequently fail to consider people with disabilities for promotions (Krefting & Brief, 1976). There are also suggestions that the inequalities experienced by people with disabilities are due to short sighted employment perspectives which fail to recognise the need for a career development approach to the issues of underemployment (McCarthy, 1988).

1.5.2.1. Perceived Costs

A large proportion of the research has focused on the limitations of employers' attitudes at the selection stage. Common to much of the research is that employers often associate disability with cost (Nathanson, 1977; Stone & Sawatzki, 1980; Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987; Kittingham, 1982; Bascand, 1987; Johnson, Greenwood & Schriener, 1988; Friedman, 1993). Many believe that the cost of absenteeism, training, supervision, alterations, accident rates, turnover, and poor performance rise dramatically when people with disabilities are employed. As a result many employers are reluctant to hire a disabled person, even more so given the economic constraints on employers in the 1990s. Several studies show that the employers frequently over estimate the costs associated with hiring people with disabilities (Nathanson, 1977; Wysocki & Wysocki, 1979).

One of the major beliefs is that people with disabilities are more accident prone, with the result that employers incur greater insurance costs (Nathanson, 1977; Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987; Kittingham, 1982; Bascand, 1987; Johnson, Greenwood & Schriener, 1988). In Wilgosh's and Skaret's (1987) review, several studies identified safety as a major concern of employers. In a study of people with epilepsy, Gade and Toutges (1987) reported that employers frequently cited safety as a reason for not employing an epileptic (cited in Wilgosh and Skaret, 1987, p91). Employers' perceptions of safety have been found to vary according to the disability and the type of work. One study found

employers' views of people with deafness altered according to the perceived hazards of the job. So work on a construction site was perceived as hazardous but an electrical assembly job was not (Phillips, 1975).

Despite employers' perceptions of the greater insurance costs involved when employing people with disabilities, records of actual costs refute such claims. In 1973 Du Pont analysed the safety records of 1,452 employees with disabilities and found that 96 percent fulfilled the safety requirements to an average or better than average standard (cited in Nathanson, 1977, p7; Pati, 1978, p146; Wysocki & Wysocki, 1987, p63). In a more recent study of people with intellectual disabilities, Tse (1994) found that they did, in fact, meet work safety standards.

The second concern expressed by employers has been referred to as dependability (Nathanson, 1977). A number of employers believe that, by hiring people with disabilities, they will be taking on less dependable employees because they are more often absent, are less reliable and have a higher turnover rate (Nathanson, 1977; Mithaug, 1979; Johnson, Greenwood & Schriener, 1988). These beliefs reflect ideas which stem from the individual theories of disability. Concerns about frequent absenteeism originate from the attitudes which associate disability with disease and illness. This has been challenged by studies which have reported the level of absenteeism to be on a par with non-disabled employees, with turnover actually being less among employees with

disabilities (Nathanson, 1977). As cited by Nathanson (1977, p7) in the Du Pont study, 79 percent of the employees with disabilities had an average or better attendance rating.

It is reasonable to expect employers to want to hire people with excellent performance records, and this raises the third issue, that of productivity. Employers usually perceive people with disabilities as less productive and capable of only producing poor quality work (Nathanson, 1977; Kittingham, 1982; Bascand, 1987; Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987; Johnson, Greenwood & Schriener, 1988). Translated into monetary terms this inefficiency is viewed by employers as a cost. Again, this attitude can be tied back to the individual theories of disability which portray people with disabilities as dependent and inferior beings.

The reality is that, as in the general workforce, there are people with disabilities who are very productive and those who are not as productive. By and large people with disabilities have been found to be productive employees and the Du Pont study concluded that 91 percent of employees with disabilities performed at an average or better than average level (Nathanson, 1977).

The standard work environment does not always suit people with disabilities and so employers may have to make modifications to accommodate them. Workplace modifications are a fourth concern of employers who feel that

they are likely to be disruptive and expensive, both financially and in terms of the time taken to complete. In fact alterations are usually minor and inexpensive (Nathanson, 1977; Ascraft, 1979; Friedman, 1993). Of 2,000 contractors who made workplace alternations to accommodate people with disabilities, 81 percent spent less than US \$500 (Parent & Everson, 1986). With a little creativity and flexibility employers can often develop a simple, yet effective, workplace accommodation. This is illustrated by the hearing impaired professor who, to overcome the problem of not hearing students' questions, asked them to submit written questions during the course of the lecture (Friedman, 1993).

1.5.2.2. Moderating Factors

The general studies of employer attitudes towards people with disabilities present attitudes as a positive-negative dichotomy and fail to consider moderating factors. However, several studies have focused on the idea that employers' attitudes are moderated by factors such as the nature of the disability and the type of work (Johnson, Greenwood & Schriner, 1988; Bowman, 1987; Thomas & Thomas, 1985). Johnson et al. (1988) studied the attitudes of employers towards the work performance and work productivity⁴

⁴ *Work performance*: "quantity of work output, quality of work output, tenure, absenteeism, flexibility in adapting to demands of the work setting, participation in staff development, ability to advance in the organisation and safety."

Work personality: "acceptance of the work role, teamwork, ability to profit from instruction, work persistence, work tolerance, seeking assistance from supervisor, amount of supervision required, degree of comforter anxiety with supervisor, appropriateness of personal relations with supervisor, ability to socialize with co-workers and social communication skills." (Johnson et al., 1988).

of people who were described as having physical, mental, emotional or communication disabilities. Employers expressed most concern over the work performance and work personality of employees with mental and emotional disabilities (Johnson et al., 1988). By contrast, they were relatively positive to the work performance and work personality attributes of employees with physical disabilities and expressed moderate interest in employees with communication disabilities (Johnson et al., 1988). Mithaug (1979) also found employers were more willing to employ people with physical disabilities than with severe mental disabilities. He attributed this difference to the importance of the following five factors which influence the hiring decisions of employers: job performance, productivity, compliance with affirmative action, absenteeism and positive public relations.

Bowman (1987) compared the attitudes of various respondents⁵ towards people described as having the following disabilities: epilepsy, deafness, blindness, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, paralysed legs, a former mental patient, facial disfigurement and a former alcoholic. The study focused on the work competence of employees with disabilities. Respondents rated people with facial disfigurements or former alcoholics as the most competent employees and people with cerebral palsy or mental retardation as the least competent (Bowman, 1987). A similar pattern was also found by Thomas and Thomas (1985), with paraplegics receiving the highest ratings on expected job

⁵ Respondents included employers, employees, housewives, students and unemployed people (Bowman, 1987).

performance, followed by people with epilepsy and multiple sclerosis. In a study of 15 different disabilities, Comb and Omvig (1986) concluded that employers perceived impaired speech as the easiest disability to accommodate and severe mental retardation as the most difficult, a reflection of the general trend of physical disabilities being easier to accommodate than mental disabilities. Of particular interest was the higher than expected rating for epilepsy and the lower rating for blindness and visual impairment (Comb & Omvig, 1986).

The attitudes of employers is also moderated by the perceived competency of people with disabilities to perform different types of work. Bowman (1987) found the competency ratings for people with specific disabilities (except blindness) were more positive (for the T.V. entertainer, filing clerk, newspaper reporter and film projectionist jobs) when the level of job complexity decreased. By contrast, the perceived competency of people with disabilities as childcare workers and counsellors decreased as the level of complexity decreased (Bowman, 1987). These judgements of competency appear to reflect employers' perceptions of the individual's functional limitations, as evidenced by fewer positive ratings of competency as both the severity of the disability and complexity of the job increased (Bowman, 1987). These attitudes fit into the individual theories' view of disability as a problem created by the individual's limitations.

A comparison of employers' attitudes towards people with disabilities in general, and more specifically people with learning disabilities, found more positive attitudes towards the former group (Minskoff, Sautter, Hoffmann & Hawks, 1987). The majority of employers were prepared to hire and make special allowances (such as giving more support, training, detailed direction and a better fit between the person and the job) for people with disabilities in general but were more reluctant to make such commitments to those with learning disabilities. Minskoff et al. (1987) offers several explanations for this difference. Firstly, they suggest that employers had more positive attitudes towards people with visible disabilities because disabilities which can be seen are more easily understood. A second and alternative explanation is that, if they have no experience of people with learning disabilities, employers are not able to realistically judge their job performance. However, employers with experience are more likely to be able to evaluate the performance of the individual (Minskoff et al., 1987).

The degree of willingness among employers to hire people with disabilities is also affected by their level of experience. Those who have had experience with employees with disabilities are generally more willing to employ them (Lyth, 1973; Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987; Minskoff et al., 1987; Wilgosh and Mueller, 1989). Wilgosh and Mueller (1989) found that employers who were prepared to accept an individual with mental disabilities on work experience or job placement had more positive attitudes and expressed a willingness to hire

these individuals. By contrast, employers who would not take on mentally disabled individuals believed that they would cause problems and be expensive to the company (Wilgosh and Mueller, 1989). Similarly, Holmes' and McWilliams' (1981) questionnaire revealed that employers who had knowledge of epilepsy and experience with epileptics were more willing to hire them (cited in Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987).

Experience does not always equate to a willingness to hire people with disabilities as Phillips (1975) found when he examined employers' attitudes towards employing the deaf. Those who had had negative experiences with deaf employees were less willing to hire these employees. Typically, negative experiences were those which resulted from employees who were not productive and who displayed social or work performance problems (Phillips, 1975). It is difficult to determine whether these differences truly reflect the problems associated with the employee or, in fact, stem from the employer's inability to accommodate an employee's impairment. Alternatively, the personality of these employees (like that of their non-disabled counterparts) may well have contributed to the problems, rather than any problems associated with the individual's disability.

A final factor to consider is the degree of visibility of the disability. Research has found that employers' perceptions of people with disabilities are also influenced by the visibility of the disability (Rose & Brief, 1979; Falvo,

Allen & Maki, 1982; Schmelkin, 1984; Schmelkin, 1985; Gouvier, Steiner, Jackson, Schlater & Rain, 1991). In an investigation of the dimensionality of disability labels, Schmelkin (1985) identified visibility as one of four dimensions. In this dimension he defined visibility according to whether the disability was obvious or hidden (Schmelkin, 1985). Although this is an important dimension, Schmelkin (1985) argues that it must be examined in relation to the other three dimensions: specific versus diffuse disabilities, physical disabilities and behavioural-emotional versus cognitive disabilities.

Several studies have investigated the effects of visibility in relation to the attitude of employers (Rose & Brief, 1979; Gouvier et al., 1991). Generally, employers rate people with highly visible disabilities lower than people with less visible disabilities and are therefore less willing to employ them (Gouvier et al., 1991). Visibility alone does not account for the attitudes of employers towards people with disabilities. Rather, it interacts with factors such as the type of disability and the nature of the job (as discussed previously). Gouvier et al. (1991) found that people with visible and neurologically based disabilities were rated less favourably than were people with less visible, non-neurological disabilities. Furthermore, people with visible disabilities received very low ratings on jobs which involved high public contact (Gouvier et al., 1991).

An experiment by Rose and Brief (1979) led them to conclude that there was very little perceived difference between the ability of an individual with

epilepsy, an amputee and a non-disabled person to establish satisfactory relationships with the public. However, Rose and Brief (1979) conceded that the limitations of their study may in fact underestimate the propensity of employers to differentiate between these three groups of people. This is highlighted by the finding that amputees received a smaller salary than the non-disabled and epileptic employees (Rose & Brief, 1979).

A further factor which impacts on the selection process and decision making of employers is the appearance of people with disabilities. Although fraught with criticism, selection interviews are still a widely accepted and frequently used method of choosing a potential employee (Stone & Sawatzki, 1980). A common finding is that an interviewer's selection decision is strongly influenced by the first four minutes of the interview (Christman & Branson, 1990; Christman & Slaten, 1991). Consequently, the appearance of the applicant has an important impact on the selection decision (Christman & Branson, 1990; Barnes, 1992; Tse, 1994). In an evaluation of potential employees dress was an important consideration (Christman & Branson, 1990). Applicants received higher evaluations when they were dressed in an appropriate rather than an inappropriate manner (Christman & Branson, 1990). As discussed earlier, Livneh (1982) identified appearance as one element which contributes to the formation of attitudes.

1.6. Research Outline

1.6.1. Overview

People with disabilities quite clearly experience more than the usual difficulties in both obtaining and retaining employment. These difficulties are further highlighted by the high levels of underemployment and unemployment in Britain, U.S.A. and New Zealand. Several theories of disability have sought to address these employment experiences. As the focus moves from the individual theories to the social theories of disability so a new angle opens up from which an old problem can be addressed. From the social perspective, people with disabilities experience barriers to employment because of the structure and functions of society and its social organisations, together with their effect in shaping attitudes and behaviour within society. From a social perspective the limited employment opportunities for people with disabilities are reflected by the negative societal views of the disabled. Breaking down the barriers to employment would involve reshaping society, its focus and formation, with a view of producing attitudes and behaviour which are more positive. The process of change would have to filter through national, local and personal levels. To achieve this, governments would have to intervene to create policies and principles which would foster a philosophy of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities. Similarly, at the company level employers would have to set in place positive policies and practices to deal with the employment of those with disabilities.

There is very little research on disability and employment in New Zealand. As a result little is known about the extent to which people with disabilities experience difficulties in employment. Given that there are a number of similarities between the results of overseas research and what New Zealand studies there are, it is likely that useful parallels can be drawn from the overseas experience.

The present study investigated the employment situation of people with disabilities. Due to the limited budget and time constraints the study was restricted to Christchurch and focused on disability and employment from the employers' perspective. The aim was to gain a better overview of the topic but the researcher appreciated that a complete picture could only be achieved if people with disabilities were included in the study (a feat unfortunately beyond the realms of this research paper). This omission is acknowledged as a limitation of this study.

1.6.2. Hypotheses

The employment situation of people with disabilities was investigated from the following hypotheses:

1. Employers who have had the experience of employing people with disabilities have more positive attitudes than do employers with no experience.
2. The larger the organisations the more likely it was to employ people with disabilities.
3. The more invisible the disability the more likely the employee is to be employed in a position which requires face-to-face contact with the clients, customers or the public.
4. The number of white males with disabilities in employment will be significantly higher than that of females and minority group members with disabilities.

CHAPTER TWO

METHOD

2.1. Participants

Three hundred and fifty Christchurch based employers¹ were selected for this study. They each received a copy of the questionnaire and a letter explaining the purpose of the research. Participation in the study was voluntary.

The study focused on employers from within the service industries. Each employer was placed in one of four industrial groups according to the predominant business of the employer's firm. These industrial groups were selected in accordance with the industrial divisions as outlined in the 1991 Census of Population and Dwelling (Department of Statistics New Zealand, 1993).

The four groups included:

- i) retail, restaurant, hotel.
- ii) transport, storage, communication.
- iii) business and financial services.
- iv) communication, social and personal services.

¹ The term employers is used collectively in this document to refer to the manager, personnel manager, human resource manager or to refer to the person who is responsible for employees.

2.2. Procedure

2.2.1 Selection

Half of the firms were randomly selected from the Yellow Pages (1993) using a computer generated random numbering system. The computer produced a five digit sequence, in which the first three numbers represented the page, and the following two numbers indicated the column and row from which the firm was selected. The remaining one hundred and seventy five firms were randomly selected from a list of six hundred firms on file at Workbridge².

The list of firms was compiled from two sources to ensure that there was a balance between those firms who did employ, and those who did not employ, people with disabilities. The Yellow Pages (1993) represented an excellent mix of Christchurch based firms. However, given that the majority of firms do not employ people with disabilities, this was expected to generate a list of firms who were less likely to be employing disabled people. By contrast, it was highly likely that the firms from the Workbridge file were employing people with disabilities.³

² Workbridge is a government funded agency which provides assistance to people with disabilities who are seeking employment and employment related training.

³ Of the returned questionnaires, 82 firms hired people with disabilities. The Workbridge sample represented 56.1 percent of the employers, with the remaining 43.9 from the non-Workbridge sample.

To obtain a representative sample of firms, each firm was assigned to one of the four industrial groups (see below). The number of firms selected from these industrial groups was determined by the number of people employed in the group. This was based on the figures given in the 1991 Census of Population and Dwelling for Christchurch (Department of Statistics New Zealand, 1993). Refer to table 2.1.

From the 1991 census 32 percent of people were employed in the retail, restaurant and hotel industries, 11 percent in the transport, communication and storage industries, 17 percent in the business and financial services, and 40 percent in the community, social and personal services. Based on these figures, the proportion of firms selected for this study was similar to the percentage of people employed in each industrial group.

Of the three hundred and fifty firms selected for this study, thirty two percent (or 112 firms) were from the retail, restaurant and hotel group, eleven percent (or 38 firms) were from the transport, storage and communication group, seventeen percent (or 60 firms) were from the business and financial services and the remaining forty percent (or 140 forty) were from the community, social and personal services. Refer to table 2.1.

Table 2.1: *The number of firms by industrial groups.*

Industrial Groups	Number of Firms Surveyed
Retail, Restaurant and Hotel	112
Transport, Communication and Storage	38
Business and Financial Services	60
Community, Social and Personal Services	140
Total:	350

A telephone call was made to each firm to obtain the name of the employer so that the questionnaire could be addressed personally, and so that there was a contact person to telephone should a follow-up call be necessary.

2.2.2 Distribution of Questionnaires

Of the three hundred and fifty questionnaires, one hundred and thirty were posted to employers, while two hundred and twenty were hand delivered. Before the questionnaires were posted employers received a telephone call explaining the nature of the research and what the questionnaire involved. The same explanation was given to the employers to whom the questionnaire was hand delivered.

Each employer received the questionnaire, together with a letter of explanation, an instruction sheet, an outline of the type of disabilities and a pre-paid self-addressed envelope (refer to appendix A).

All three sections of the questionnaire were coded using a three digit coding system. A different code was used to identify each employer. This was purely for administrative purposes and, in particular, for follow-up telephone calls. When the completed questionnaires were returned the code was recorded. The code was then matched with the firm whose name was removed from the list of outstanding questionnaires. All information from employers was treated as strictly confidential. A separate list was compiled and contained only the name of the firm and the corresponding code.

2.2.3. Returns

Employers who had not returned the questionnaire after one week were telephoned to confirm whether or not they had received the questionnaire. They were then reminded of the completion date. Where employers were unavailable a similar message was left with the secretary. Those who replied to the questionnaire received a brief summary of the results outlining the main findings.

2.3. Instrument

2.3.1. Design

The questionnaire was designed to assess employers' perceptions of disability in the workplace. Ideas for the questions came from reviewing the recent overseas and New Zealand literature. Of particular interest were the two New Zealand studies by Kittingham (1981) and Bascand (1987) which gave a New Zealand perspective on disability and employment. Despite their limitations, these studies provided a number of ideas for some of the questions.

Before the questionnaire was written its form, style and content were discussed with a professional from Workbridge. This input was valuable in providing up-to-date knowledge of disability and employment in New Zealand.

The completed questionnaire is shown in appendix A and contained the following three sections:

- Sections:
- i. Company Information.
 - ii. Employee Profiles.
 - iii. People with Disabilities in Employment.

2.3.1.1. Company Information

The first section was divided into three questions, all of which related to the employer's firm. Information was obtained about the firm's business/industry, its size, and whether it employed people with disabilities.

These questions were aimed at attracting the employers' attention and enticing them further into the questionnaire. Questions were kept simple, were easy to understand, and could be answered quickly. Yet at the same time, they were designed to provide valuable information.

2.3.1.2. Employee Profiles (employees with disabilities)

Only employers who were or had employed people with disabilities answered this section as the questions required information about actual disabled employees. Following an initial question on the number of employees with disabilities, this section was divided into two parts: A, demographics and B, employment.

Part A: Demographics. The four questions in this section covered the employees' gender, ethnicity, age and their disability. With the exception of disability, which was open-ended, the remaining three questions had a range of response options.

Part B: Employment. This section dealt with aspects of the employees' position, as well as the employers' perceptions of their employees. Questions

1 to 7 covered the following issues: the job position and the corresponding duties, the number of hours worked per week, what modifications were made to accommodate the employee, the disability and its work related origins⁴ (if applicable), and the amount of contact employees had with customers, clients and the public. Question 8 related to the employers' perceptions of the employee in relation to the following issues: productivity, absenteeism, skill acquisition, communication with fellow employees and supervisors, and co-operation.

2.3.1.3. People with Disabilities in Employment

Employers were asked a series of questions on their companies' attitudes towards disability in the workplace. The six questions covered issues on the pre-employment and the employment of people with disabilities. Question one looked at the range of disabilities and dealt specifically with those disabilities which employers judged as not appropriate for employment. In the following four questions employers were asked to consider a number of issues which might arise during the selection and employment of disabled people. These questions focused on employment policies, accommodation, selection and career development⁵ of people with disabilities. Finally, employers were asked to indicate the likelihood of their company employing people with disabilities.

⁴ As there were only five cases in which the person's disability resulted from a work related accident these were not included in the analysis.

⁵ This question was not included in the analysis as a large number of employers either did not answer it or only answered part of it.

2.3.2. Style of the Questions

The majority of questions required the respondent to simply mark the appropriate option. There were two main styles, either the yes/no/don't know or maybe options and the category lists, such as, Pakeha, European, Maori, Asian, Other. In several instances rating scales were used. A five point rating scale was used with one being the most likely option and five the least likely option. Question seven of the *employee profile* section and questions four and five of the *people with disabilities in employment* section used this style. In question eight of the *employee profile* section a seven point rating scale was used. This scale rated the ability of the employee on the employment related issues discussed in section 2.3.1.2. The scale spanned the possible range of employees' behaviour, from the highly competent to the incompetent employee with a neutral option (number four) for employers who did not know how the employee measured up on the option. To prevent employers giving employees the same rating, items b, c and e of this question had the scale reversed. Only a few questions did not conform to this style and instead had a rather unstructured style. Questions 1b, 2 and 6 of the *employee profiles* section and questions 3, 5 and 6 of the *people with disabilities in employment* section were all questions with no structured answers.

2.3.3. Validity and Reliability

To gauge the validity and reliability of the questionnaire it was pretested on a representative sample of firms. Ten firms were selected each from a different size category and industrial group (refer to table 2.2). The initial questionnaire was tested on seven firms, with a further three firms completing the final copy of the questionnaire.

2.3.3.1. Pretesting the Questionnaire

Employers were contacted by telephone and invited to participate in a pretest of the questionnaire which was estimated to take about thirty minutes of their time. Following a brief introduction and explanation of what was involved each employer was given an envelope which contained the covering letter, definition sheet, instruction page and the questionnaire. As the employer answered the questionnaire he/she was assessed on verbal and non-verbal responses. All comments were recorded. In addition notes were taken on the way in which employers answered the questionnaire.

As a result of the pretest, the following modifications were made to the questionnaire. Firstly, questions one and five of section three were extended so as to provide a more accurate picture of employers' perceptions of which particular people with disabilities they would not employ or promote. A second alteration involved the sequence of questions. Initially, question eight of the

employee profile section was in the *people with disabilities in employment* section and was designed to indicate the general attitude of employers towards people with disabilities. However, its design was more appropriate for assessing the attitudes of employers towards specific individuals with disabilities. As this information was thought to be of more value the question was transferred to its current position. These changes simplified and improved the questionnaire, making it easier to understand and more straight forward to follow.

Table 2.2. *Industrial groups and sizes of the companies selected for pretesting.*

Industrial Groups	Number of Employees (Size)		
	0-20	21-100	101+
Retail, Restaurant and Hotel	1	1	1*
Transport, Communication and Storage	1	1	1
Business and Financial Services	1		1
Community, Social and Personal Services	1*	1*	

*second pretest.c

The modified questionnaire was assessed by several independent professionals who approved its content, style and structure.

To ensure that the error rating was no greater than 0.05, a power analysis revealed that it was necessary to have a minimum of 150 replies, although 200 replies was a more desirable number.

2.3.4. Coding and Analysing the Questionnaire

As discussed in section 2.3.2. the questions were either unstructured or involved a structured answer with a choice of options. The structured questions were coded into categories and analysed using chi-squared. In the unstructured questions a subjective analysis technique was used whereby a list of themes was compiled from the employers' responses. Common themes were grouped together under a single heading, with approximately six to eight major groups of comments per question.

2.3.5. The Questionnaire and Beyond

The questionnaire was colour coded to enhance its appeal, encourage employers to complete it, and to ensure that it was easy to follow. In addition to the questionnaire, employers also received the following: a covering letter; a title page; an instruction sheet; and a list of disabilities. These were all designed to assist the employer in completing the questionnaire and can be seen in appendix A.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

Of the 350 employers who received questionnaires, 203 returned them. However, for a variety of reasons 17 of these were not answered (refer to table 3.1). This left a total of 186 questionnaires which were completed and able to be used in the study. Although 58 percent of the questionnaires were returned, the response rate was only 53.1 percent as 17 had to be discarded.

Table 3.1. *The reasons why questionnaires were returned unanswered.*

Explanations	Number of Returns
Solo business	5
Retired	1
Gone out of business	2
Refused	2
Too busy	1
Unable to answer	2
No explanation	5
Total:	17

The proportion of firms who returned the questionnaires was relatively even across the four industrial divisions. Refer to table 3.2. for details.

Table 3.2. *The percentage of returned questionnaires by industrial groupings.*

Industrial Group	Number Sent	Number Returned	Percent Returned
Retail, Restaurant, Hotel	112	63	56.3%
Transportation, Communication & Storage	38	26	68.4%
Business & Financial Services	60	33	55.0%
Community, Social & Personal Services	140	64	45.7%
Total:	350	186	

3.1.1. Distribution of Sample

Table 3.3. outlines the distribution of firms according to the employment practice of employers¹ (do employ, or do not employ).² A chi-square test (goodness-of-fit) on the data was based on the null hypothesis that the sample was equally distributed between the two categories, and the alternative hypothesis stating that it was not equally distributed between the two categories. The chi-square value was small so the null hypothesis was not

¹ Categories two and four were combined with categories one and three respectively as they were too small for separate analysis (table 2.2.).

² The terms *do employ* and *do not employ* are used interchangeably with *employers with experience* and *employers with no experience* and refer to the same concepts.

rejected ($\chi^2 (1, N = 186) = 2.60, ns$). In fact, the difference between employers who did (44.1%) and those who did not (55.9%) employ people with disabilities was not statistically significant. This created a strong base from which to conduct further analyses.

Table 3.3. *The total number of firms identified as having experience or having no experience of employees with disabilities.*

Employment Practice (experience of employers)	Count	Sum	Percent
Currently employing (1)	65	82	44.1%
Employed in the past (2)	17		
Never employed (3)	95	104	55.9%
Don't know (4)	9		
Total:	186	186	100.0%

Given that the questionnaires were distributed on a proportional basis³ to all four industrial groups, the return rate was relatively similar. This is outlined in table 3.4. which shows no significant difference between the four groups ($\chi^2 (3, N = 186) = 3.22, ns$).

³ The questionnaires were distributed according to the percentage of employees employed in the four industrial groups. For more details refer to section 2.2.1. of the method section.

Table 3.4. *The distribution of firms by industrial groups.*

Industrial Group	Number	Expected
Retail, Restaurant, Hotel	63	59.52
Transportation, Communication & Storage	26	20.46
Business & Financial Services	33	31.62
Community, Social & Personal Services	64	74.40
Total:	186	

3.2. Size of Firms

Table 3.5. provides a comparison of the current employment practice (do employ vs. do not employ) with the size of the firm (small, medium, or large). Using a chi-square test (2x3) of homogeneity, the null hypothesis stated that the current employment practice was independent of firm size, with the alternative hypothesis being that the size of the firm is not independent of current employment practice. Given the chi-square value of (χ^2 (2, $N = 185$) = 36.55, $p < .01$), the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the current employment practice does depend on the size of the firm and, as shown in table 3.5, there were significantly more large firms employing people with disabilities than small firms.

Table 3.5. *The percentage of small, medium and large firms who employ and do not employ people with disabilities.*

Employers	Small (1-20 employees)	Medium (21-100 employees)	Large (101+ employees)
Do Employ People with Disabilities	28.0%	64.6%	89.5%
Do NOT Employ People with Disabilities	72.0%	35.4%	10.5%
Total:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3.6. outlines the overall distribution of the firms by size (small, medium and large) and the percentage of the disabled employees in each of these categories (small, medium and large). Although the majority of firms were small they employed only 26 percent of the disabled employees. By contrast, 42.1 percent were employed by medium sized firms, with large firms employing the remaining 31.7 percent. The final column in table 3.6. shows a ratio of the number of firms by the number of disabled employees. There were proportionally more disabled employees in large firms than in medium and small firms.

Table 3.6: *Percentage of employees employed by organisational size.*

Size of Firm	Distribution of Firms	Percentage of Disabled Employees	Ratio of the Number of Firms by the Number of Disabled Employees
0-20 employees (small)	63.9%	26.0%	12:4
21-100 employees (medium)	26.0%	42.1%	12:15
101+ employees (Large)	10.3%	31.7%	12:30
Total:	100.0%	99.8%	

3.3. Gender and Ethnicity

Table 3.7. outlines the break down of gender (male vs. female) according to race (Pakeha/European vs. Maori/Asian). Although the sample size for race prohibited a chi-squared analysis of this data, there were considerably more Pakeha/European males with disabilities in employment than Maori/Asian people. In fact, 98.1 percent of disabled employees were Pakeha/Europeans, with the remaining 1.9 percent being Maori/Asians.

A chi-square (goodness-of-fit) test of gender (male vs. female) was implemented on the data with the null hypothesis stating that the sample of disabled employees was equally distributed in each gender category. The alternative hypothesis was that the sample of disabled employees was not

equally divided. Given that the chi-square value was small, ($\chi^2 (1, N = 160) = .0250, n.s.$)⁴ the null hypothesis was not rejected. The percentage of males and females with disabilities was 50.6 percent and 49.4 percent respectively.

Table 3.7. *The number of male and female Pakeha/European and Maori/Asian employee with disabilities.*

Gender	Pakeha/ European	Maori/Asian	Total (Percent)
Males	79	1	80 (50.3%)
Females	77	2	79 (49.7%)
Total	156 (98.1%)	3 (1.9%)	159 (100%)

To determine whether or not there were any differences between the employment of males and females with disabilities, the relationships between **gender** and the following four variables were tested: **age** (0-34 years, 35-49 years, or 50+ years)⁵, **industry** (retail/restaurant/hotel, transportation/storage/communication, business/finance/realestate, or social/personal/community services), **firm size** (small, medium, or large) and

⁴ Data was missing if the total was less than 160 for employee data and 186 for employer data.

⁵ As age group 0-19 was too small (3.8%) to use in the analysis on its own, it was combined with the 20-34 year old group.

type of disability (physical, sensory-neurological, cognitive-developmental, or behavioural-emotional).

The age distribution of males and females with disabilities is presented in figure 3.1. In a chi-square test (2x3) of homogeneity, the data was tested according to the null hypothesis that gender was independent of age, and the alternative hypothesis that age was not independent of gender. As there was no dependence found between gender and age, the null hypothesis was not rejected (χ^2 (2, N = 158) = 1.66, *n.s.*). The overall majority of employees with disabilities were aged between 0-34 (55.7%). The next largest group was the 35-49 (30.4%) year age group, followed by the 50 plus age group (13.9%).

Figure 3.1. *Proportion of disabled male and female employees by age.*

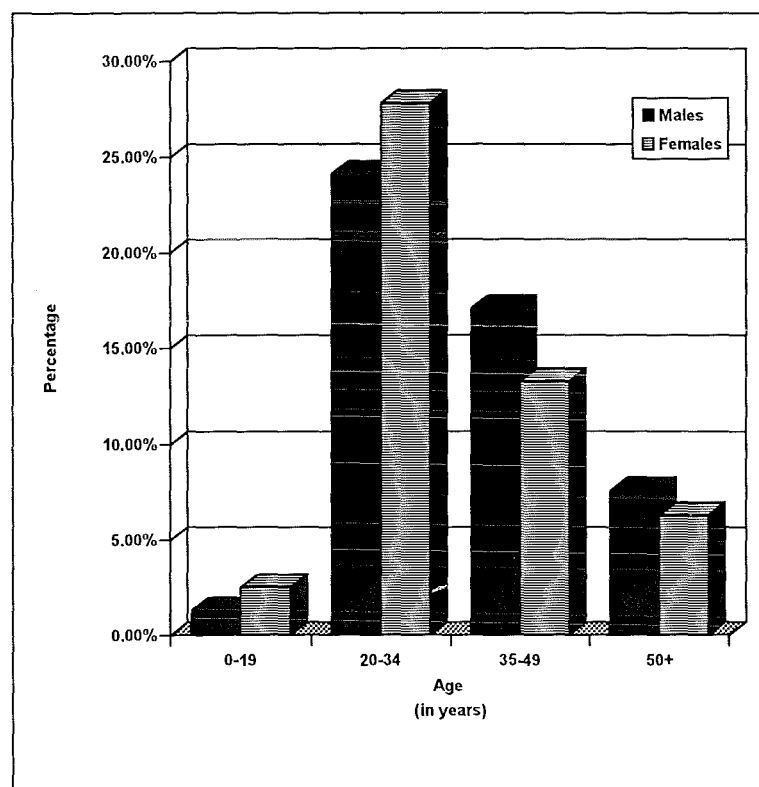


Figure 3.2. clearly illustrates gender according the four industrial groups. Based on a chi-square test (2×4) of homogeneity the null hypothesis stated that gender was independent of the industrial groups, while the alternative hypothesis was that the industrial groups were not independent of gender. As the chi-square value was ($\chi^2 (3, N = 160) = 12.62, p < .01$), the null hypothesis was rejected. While there were no differences in the retail/restaurant/hotel, or business/finance/real estate categories there were proportionally more males employed in the transportation/storage/communication category and more females in social/personal/community services.

Figure 3.2. *Proportion of males and females with disabilities according to the four industrial groupings.*

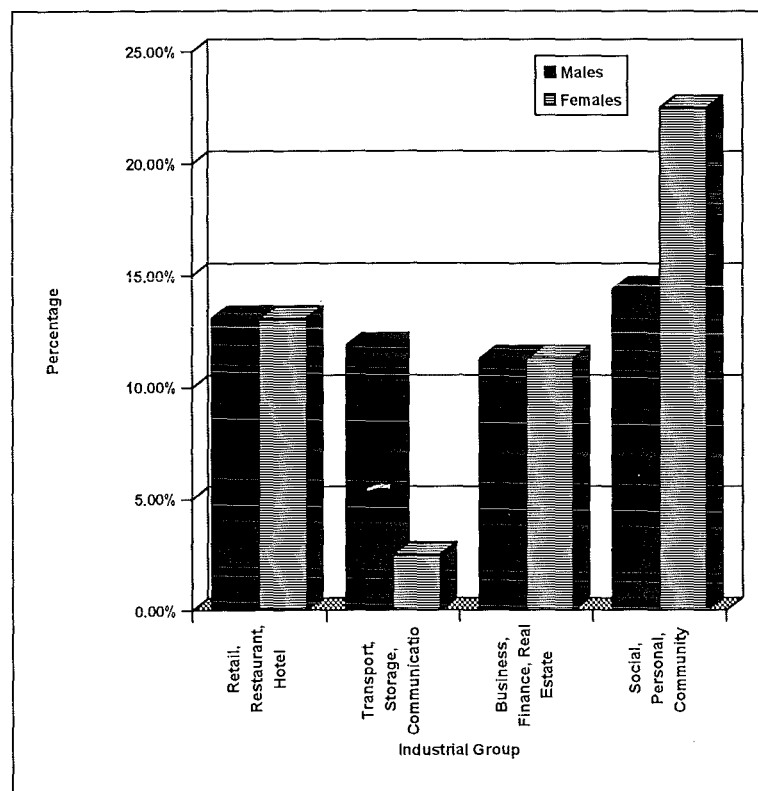
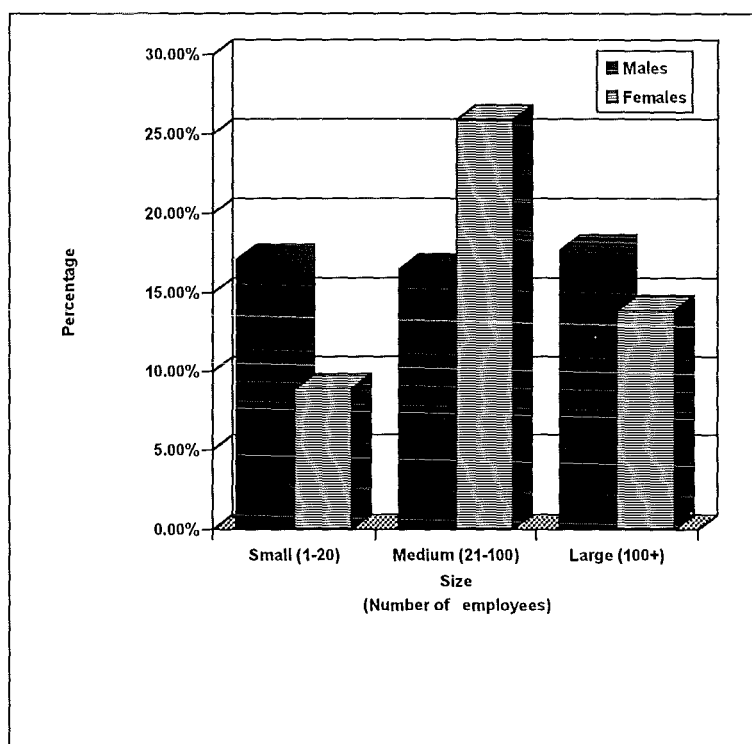


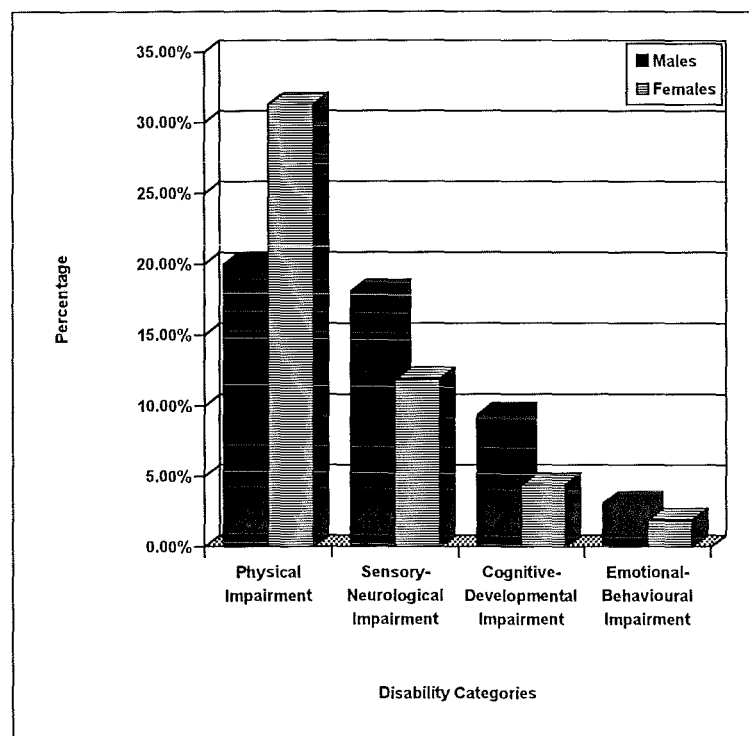
Figure 3.3. shows the distribution of gender by the size of the firm. A chi-square test (2x3) of homogeneity was undertaken on this data, with the null hypothesis being that gender was independent of firm size, and the alternative hypothesis being that firm size was not independent of gender. As the chi-square value was statistically significant, ($\chi^2 (2, N = 158) = 8.10, p < .05$) the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the proportion of males to females varied according to the size of the firm. In fact, more males were employed in small and large firms, while the number of females in medium firms was higher than that of males.

Figure 3.3. *Proportion of male and female employees with disabilities by the size of the firm.*



Finally, figure 3.4. provides a comparison of gender by disability categories. A chi-squared test (2x4) of homogeneity of this data was based on the null hypothesis that gender was independent of the disability categories, and the alternative hypothesis that the disability categories were not independent of gender. As the chi-square test was significant, ($\chi^2 (3, N = 160) = 9.42, p < .05$) the null hypothesis was rejected. As figure 3.4. illustrates there were proportionally more females than males with physical disabilities. However, in the remaining three categories (sensory-neurological, cognitive-developmental and emotional-behavioural impairments) there were significantly more males than females

Figure 3.4. *Proportion of male and female employees with disabilities by the disability categories.*



3.4. Attitudes of Employers

Central to this research was the nature of employers' attitudes towards people with disabilities. These were examined in relation to the following employment issues: criteria for selection, policies on disability, employment of people with specific disabilities, willingness to accommodate people with disabilities and the likelihood of any future employment for people with disabilities. These issues were dealt with in the questions on the green section of the questionnaire, *People with Disabilities in Employment*. Attitudes were assessed according to the employer's experience (do employ or do not employ) with disabled employees. Those with experience employing people with disabilities seemed to have more positive attitudes than did employers with no experience.

3.4.1. The Employment of People with Specific Disabilities

3.4.1.1. Probability of Employing People with Disabilities

Question one of the green section (*People with Disabilities in Employment*) contained three parts, all of which related to the employment of people with specific disabilities. In the first part employers were asked to consider whether they were likely to employ people with any one of a list of disabilities (refer to the disability category, appendix A). Figure 3.5. provides a graphical presentation of the percentage of employers who would employ either

all, some or none of the listed disabilities. Only 3.2 percent felt they could employ people with any of the disabilities⁶ listed, whereas 15.1 percent would not employ people with disabilities. However, the majority of employers (81.6 percent) indicated that they could employ people with some, but not all, of the disabilities.

Figure 3.5. *The percentage of employers who were able to employ All, Some or None of the disabilities listed.*

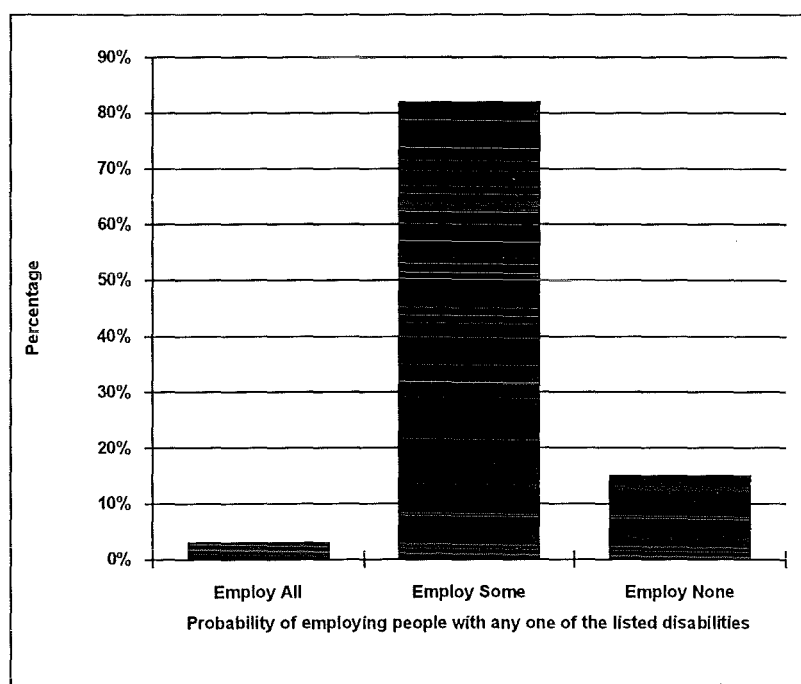


Table 3.8. provides a break down of the current employment practice (do employ vs. do not employ), with indications of future employment practice (all, some). A chi-square test (2x2) of homogeneity was undertaken on this data with the null hypothesis being that the current employment practice was

⁶ This category was so small that it was excluded in subsequent analyses.

independent of the future indicated practice, and the alternative hypothesis stating that the future indication was not independent of the current employment practice. The chi-square value was statistically significant so the null hypothesis was rejected ($\chi^2 (1, N = 185) = 17.43, p < .01$). The outcome showed that those with experience in employing people with disabilities were statistically more likely to indicate that they would employ some people with disabilities, than were those with no experience who more often indicated that they would employ none of those with disabilities.

Table 3.8. *The percentage of employers employing people with disabilities.*

Employers	Employ SOME	Employ NONE	Total
DO employ people with disabilities	97.3%	2.6%	100.0%
DO NOT employ people with disabilities	74.5	25.5%	100.0%

3.4.1.2. People with Disabilities who are Least Likely to be

Employed

The second part of question one required employers to identify these people with disabilities they were not willing to employ. Tables 3.9. and 3.10.

compare the current employment practice (yes, do employ vs. no, do not employ) with respect to the future employment preference (yes, will employ or. no, will not employ) for each of the listed disabilities. A chi-square test (2x2) of homogeneity was implemented on the data with the null hypothesis being that the current employment practices were independent of the future indicated preference, and the alternative hypothesis stating that the future indicated preferences were not independent of the current employment practices. Tables 3.9 and 3.10 outline the statistical significance of each 2x2 matrix (refer to appendix C for more details of the chi-square value). Of the disabilities that employers were statistically more willing to employ, those with experience (do employ) were significantly more willing than those with no experience (do not employ) to employ people who suffer from asthma, arthritis, RSI/OOS, brain injury, congenital deformities of the limb, stroke, diabetes, and epilepsy. The differences between employers with and without experience was not statistically independent of the null hypothesis in the case of cancer and amputations. Table 3.10. outlines the percentage of employers not willing to employ people with disabilities. Statistically more employers with experience were prepared to employ people with diseases of the central nervous system, Down's syndrome, traumatic brain injury, brain deformities, fetal alcohol syndrome, spina bifida, learning disability, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, polio and deaf/hearing impairment. Both employers with and those without experience were unwilling to employ people with the following disabilities: autism, mental

retardation, tetraplegia, behavioural-emotional impairment, mental illness, blind/visual impairment, cerebral palsy, and paraplegia.

The final columns in tables 3.9 and 3.10. present the probability of employment in New Zealand. That is, the actual likelihood that an employer will employ a person with any one of the listed disabilities. Figures that were significant ($p < .01$ and $p < .05$) were weighted according to the number of companies who did employ or did not employ (for more details refer to appendix C). The numbers shown fall in a range between 0-1 (least-most likely) and indicate the probability that an employer will employ a person with the specified disability.

Table 3.9. *The percentage of employers who are willing to employ a person with the listed disability based on the employers' current employment practices (yes, do employ or no, do not employ).*

Type of Disability	Employ -ment Preference	Employment Practice (experience)		Significance (p)	Probability of Employing in New Zealand
		Yes, do employ	No, do not employ		
Asthma	Yes	88.0%	67.7%	.01	.76
	No	12.0%	32.3%		
Arthritis	Yes	82.7%	64.6%	.01	.73
	No	17.3%	35.4%		

Table 3.9. (contd.).

Type of Disability	Employment Preference	Employment Practice (experience)		Significance (<i>p</i>)	Probability of Employing in New Zealand
		Yes, do employ	No, do not employ		
Cancer	Yes	74.7%	64.6%	<i>ns</i>	.29
	No	25.3%	35.4%		
RSI/OOS	Yes	76.0%	57.6%	.01	.66
	No	24.0%	42.4%		
Back Injury	Yes	70.7%	51.5%	.01	.78
	No	29.3%	48.5%		
Amputation	Yes	62.7%	54.5%	<i>ns</i>	.58
	No	37.3%	45.5%		
Congenital deformity of the limb(s)	Yes	70.7%	49.5%	.01	.59
	No	29.3%	50.5%		
Stroke	Yes	68.0%	47.5%	.01	.56
	No	32.0%	52.5%		
Diabetes	Yes	66.7%	47.5%	.01	.56
	No	33.3%	52.5%		
Epilepsy	Yes	66.7%	39.4%	.01	.51
	No	33.3%	60.6%		

Table 3.10. *The percentage of employers who are unwilling to employ a person with the listed disability based on the employers' current employment practices (yes, do employ or no, do not employ).*

Type of Disability	Employment Preference	Employment Practice (experience)		Significance (p)	Probability of Employing in New Zealand
		Yes, do employ	No, do not employ		
Autism	Yes	16.0%	12.1%	ns	.14
	No	84.0%	87.9%		
Mental Retardation	Yes	20.0%	14.1%	ns	.17
	No	80.0%	85.9%		
Tetraplegic	Yes	20.0%	14.1%	ns	.17
	No	80.0%	85.9%		
Behavioural -Emotional Impairment	Yes	18.7%	18.2%	ns	.18
	No	81.3%	81.8%		
CNS Disease	Yes	26.7%	12.1%	.01	.18
	No	73.3%	87.9%		
Down's Syndrome	Yes	28.0%	14.1%	.05	.20
	No	72.0%	85.9%		
Traumatic Brain Injury	Yes	30.7%	13.1%	.01	.20
	No	69.3%	86.9%		
Mental Illness	Yes	24.0%	19.2%	ns	.21
	No	76.0%	80.8%		

Table 3.10. (Contd.).

Type of Disability	Employment Preference	Employment Practice (experience)		Significance (<i>p</i>)	Probability of Employing in New Zealand
		Yes, do employ	No, do not employ		
Blind/ Visually Impaired	Yes	25.3%	18.2%	<i>ns</i>	.21
	No	74.7%	81.8%		
Brain Deformity	Yes	32.0%	15.2%	.01	.22
	No	68.0%	84.8%		
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	Yes	37.3%	19.2%	.01	.27
	No	62.7%	80.8%		
Cerebral Palsy	Yes	36.0%	23.2%	<i>ns</i>	.29
	No	64.0%	76.8%		
Spina Bifida	Yes	41.3%	27.3%	.05	.33
	No	58.7%	72.7%		
Paraplegic	Yes	32.0%	35.4%	<i>ns</i>	.34
	No	68.0%	64.6%		
Learning Disabled - Dyslexia	Yes	50.7%	26.3%	.01	.37
	No	49.3%	73.7%		
Multiple Sclerosis	Yes	46.7%	32.3%	.05	.39
	No	53.3%	67.7%		
Muscular Dystrophy	Yes	48.0%	33.3%	.05	.4
	No	52.0%	66.7%		

Table 3.10. (contd.).

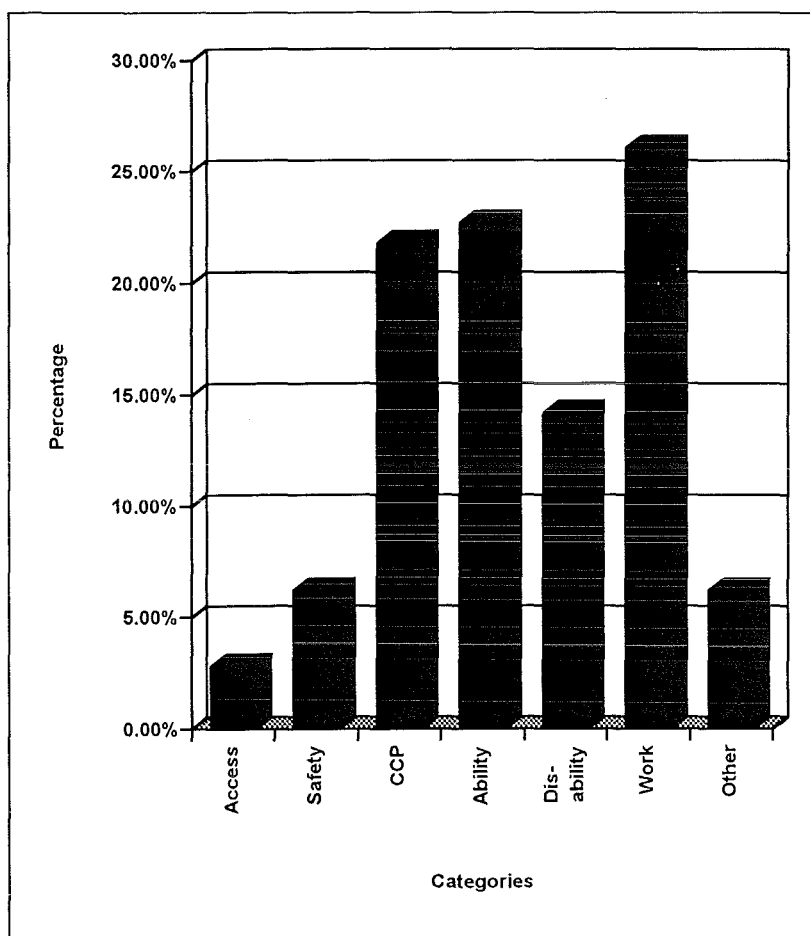
Type of Disability	Employment Preference	Employment Practice (experience)		Significance (<i>p</i>)	Probability of Employing in New Zealand
		Yes, do employ	No, do not employ		
Polio	Yes	50.7%	35.4%	.05	.42
	No	49.3%	64.6%		
Deaf/ Hearing Impaired	Yes	57.3%	31.3%	.01	.41
	No	42.7%	68.7%		

3.4.1.3. Employers' Explanations

In the third part of this question employers were asked to explain why they would not employ some or all of the people with disabilities. There were a wide range of responses which were classified according to the following seven categories: access limitations at work; concerns on safety; contact with the customers/clients/public (CCP); the employees' ability to do the job; the nature of the job/work; the employee's disability; and the remaining comments which were grouped under other. As illustrated in figure 3.6, 26.1 percent of employers were concerned about the job/work, 22.7 percent about ability, 21.8 percent about customers/clients/public and 14.2 about disability. Of concern to

fewer employers was safety (6.2 percent), access (2.8 percent), and the *other* (6.2 percent).

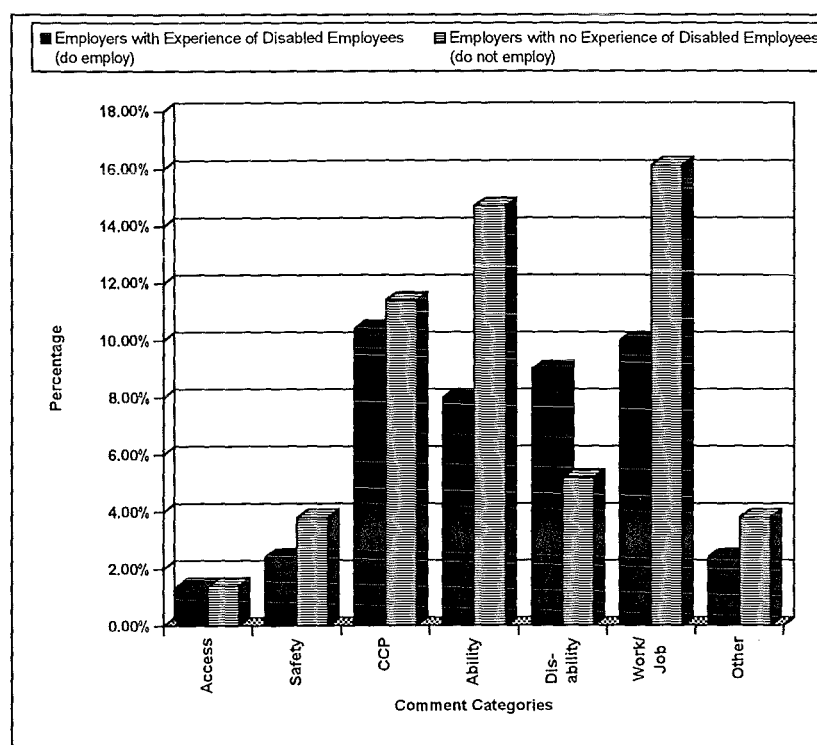
Figure 3.6. *The distribution of employers' comments by the comment categories.*



Within the categories there were differences between employers with and those with no experience of employees with disabilities. As illustrated in figure 3.7, those with no experience were more likely not to employ people with specific disabilities because of concerns regarding work/job issues and ability factors. By contrast, employers with experience expressed more concern for

disability issues than employers with no experience. There appeared to be very little difference between the level of concern expressed by both groups of employers with respect to the access, safety and customer/client/public categories. The 'other' category consisted of seven sub-categories of comments. Individually these were too small to make any reliable comparisons as each sub-category of comments was made by fewer than five employers. The category, *other*, dealt with a small number of comments about concerns with disabled employees in relation to the following issues: industrial standards, lack of knowledge on disabilities, business concerns, family business, company size, absenteeism and costs associated with employing people with disabilities.

Figure 3.7. *The percentage of replies by the comment categories for employers with and those without experience.*



Comments which discussed the limitations of access at work became part of the access category. There did not appear to be any obvious differences between the remarks of employers with (experience) and those with no experience (no experience) of disabled employees. Typical comments were as follows.

“...constraints of premises, many stairs...” - experience

“...first floor building no lift...” - no experience

The issues of safety were of slightly more concern to employers with no experience of disabled employees. Despite this, the types of concerns were similar for both groups, with employers commenting on the safety of disabled people on the worksite, as well as that of customers, clients and the public. The following are examples of their comments.

“...safety to the employee and public...” - experience

“...safety of the user and the public an issue...” - no experience

Although employers with no experience were slightly more likely not to employ a disabled person because of concerns relating to customers, clients and the public, their reasons were similar to employers with experience. Comments

focused on the problems associated with disabled employees being visible to and interacting with the customers, clients or the public, together with whether or not the customers, clients or the public would accept or be comfortable with disabled employees. These problems are clearly evident in the following comments.

“In retail situation where very clear interpersonal skills are required a lot of disabilities in all 4 categories would be inappropriate both in relation to the customers and other staff.” - experience

“As we are in the hospitality industry our appearance and how we come across to our guests is extremely important - some impairments would make our guests feel uncomfortable...” - experience

“...When dispensing accuracy is vital and it would be against public interest to have sub-standard persons involved in this activity.”
- experience

“Because we serve the public - i.e. the public expect “normal” people to be serving them. Despite public awareness and education the prejudice still remains.” - no experience

"...as staff solicitors appearance of confidence and positive attitude is as important to client as actual ability and successful application of knowledge."

- no experience

The ability of the employee with a disability was of concern to employers especially those with no experience of disabled employees. Employers expressed concern over the skills level, knowledge and expertise of employees with disabilities. The quotations below are typical of their comments.

"They would likely be unprofitable, unproductive, require constant supervision, could only do part of the work."

- experience

"We would consider that a person with the stated disabilities may not be able to competently do the job which requires a high level of competence, skills in dealing with people and ability to adapt to different situations. Must present a professional attitude towards patients and be a quick thinker."

- experience

"Not able to do job adequately. Fear/risk of taking on someone who is not productive."

- no experience

"We are in a high pressure industry where the ability to cope with stress and hard physical work are necessary. One person must be able to perform all tasks and to work alone most of the time."

- no experience

In the disability category, employers commented on the difficulty associated with employing people with specific disabilities. Employers with experience of disabled employees tended to remark more on the disability than did those with no experience. The following is a selection of their comments.

"...we try not to discriminate...but in all practicalities the idea of employing a tetraplegic in a service organisation such as ours is probably unlikely."

- experience

"In all cases it would be very dependent on the extent/severity of the problem. For example 95 percent of our work involves use of a keyboard - no hands would be a significant issue."

- experience

"Full use and co-ordination of limbs is requiredsensory-neurological abilities are also necessary to a high degree"

- no experience

The majority of comments revolved around issues relating to the work/job category. Employers with no experience of people with disabilities were particularly concerned with the nature of the job in relation to employees with specific disabilities. The following comments illustrate this category.

"I work in a highly demanding professional practice which demands high levels of skill and good communication abilities. My professional reputation depends on my good staff." - experience

"Basically only two classes of employment exist in this workplace - one requires a high level of physical ability - the other requires communication and decision making." - experience

"Work requires full physical capacity i.e. lifting, climbing ladders, driving etc" - no experience

"Because of the nature of our industry we do require people who can lift, stack, unpack as basically the job is a very demanding physical job - requiring huge quantities of boats to be priced, unpacked, merchandised and then sold and then for our staff to use selling skill to our customers" - no experience

3.4.2. Employers' Policies on Disability

Proportionally fewer employers had a written or unwritten policy on the employment of people with disabilities. In fact, only 8.6 percent indicated that they had some sort of policy on disability, while the remaining 91.4 percent did not have any form of policy. Table 3.11 compares employers' current employment practice (do employ vs. do not employ) with indications of employment policy (policy or no policy). A chi-square test (2x2) of homogeneity was implemented on the data with the null hypothesis being that current practice was independent of the indicated employment policy. The alternative hypothesis stated that the employment policy indications were not independent of the current employment practice. As outlined, the chi-square value was not independent so the null hypothesis was rejected ($\chi^2(1, N = 185) = 6.93, p < .01$). Therefore, employers who did employ people with disabilities were statistically more likely to have an employment policy than were employers who did not employ people with disabilities.

Employers identified a range of policies which they had on disability. These included formal and informal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies and pre-employment medical checks. Of the 16 employers with policies on disability, eight had a formal written policy, while seven had informal unwritten policies, and one had a policy of a pre-employment medical check. See table 3.12.

Table 3.11. *The percentage of employers who have or have no policies on disability by their current employment practices.*

Employer (employment practice)	Policy	No Policy	Total
DO Employ Disabled People	14.8%	85.2%	100.0%
DO NOT Employ Disabled People	3.8%	96.2%	100.0%

Table 3.12. *The number of different policies on disability.*

Type of Policy	Number of Policies
Pre-employment Medical	1
Written, Formal EEO	7
Unwritten, Informal EEO	8
Total	16

The following are a sample of the comments made by employers about their employment policies.

“Written - departmental EEO policy.”

“Unwritten policy - we are keen to give opportunities to people who may be disabled but have the required skills/qualities or ability for a particular position.”

3.4.3. The Willingness of Employers to Accommodate People with Disabilities

Willingness to accommodate people with disabilities was determined by the likelihood that the employer would make any form of modifications to the workplace. Employers were given three options: either they definitely *would* or *would not* make any modifications, or they marked the *maybe* option. The majority of employers (47.3%) indicated that *maybe* they would make modifications to the workplace, while 30.8 percent *would not*. The remaining 22.0 percent indicated that they *would* be prepared to make modifications.

Table 3.13 provides information on the relationship between current employment practice (do employ vs. do not employ) and the future modification practices (would, would not, or maybe). A chi-square test (2x3) of homogeneity was performed on the data with the null hypothesis being that current practice was independent of future indicated modification practice. The alternative hypothesis stated that the future modification practice was not independent of the current employment practice. The chi-square value was statistically significant so the null hypothesis was rejected (χ^2 (2, N = 182) =

6.43, $p < .05$). In fact, employers who did employ people with disabilities were statistically more willing to make modifications to accommodate them than were those who did not employ any people with disabilities, while in both groups a similar number thought they would *maybe* make modifications.

Table 3.13. *The percentage of employers who did or did not employ by their willingness to make modifications.*

Employment Practice (employers)	Would make modifications	Would NOT make modifications	Maybe make modifications	Total
DO employ people with disabilities	29.6%	23.5%	46.9%	100.0%
DO NOT employ people with disabilities	15.8%	36.6%	47.5%	100.0%

In the second part of this question employers, who *would* or *would maybe* make modifications, were asked to indicate how much they would be prepared to spend on making modifications. A large number of employers (35.2 percent) did not know how much they would spend on modifications and they were therefore excluded from the following analysis. Table 3.14. compared the current employment practice (do employ vs. do not employ) against the future

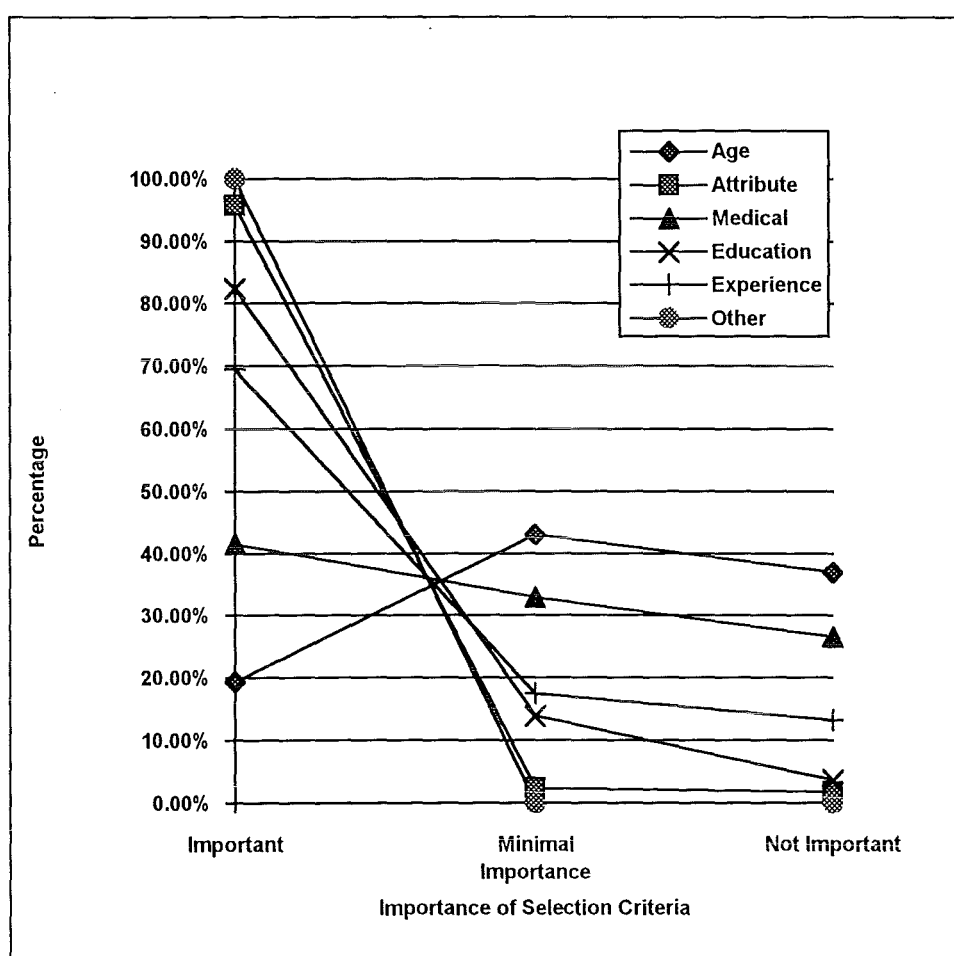
indications of the amount spent on modifications (<\$499, \$500-\$999, or \$1,000<). A chi-squared test (2x3) of homogeneity was implemented on the data with the null hypothesis that current employment practice was independent of the amount spent. The alternative hypothesis stated that the amount spent was not independent of the current employment practice. The chi-square value was statistically significant so the null hypothesis was rejected (χ^2 (2, $N = 81$) = 6.02, $p < .05$). Therefore, of the employers who did employ people with disabilities statistically more were prepared to spend over \$1,000 while those who did not employ more often indicated that they would spend under \$500 on modifications.

Table 3.14. *The amount of money that employers with and those with no experience would spend on making modifications.*

Employment Practice (employers)	<\$499	\$500-\$999	\$1,000<	Total
DO employ people with disabilities	30.8%	28.2%	41.0%	100.0%
DO NOT employ people with disabilities	54.8%	26.2%	19.0%	100.0%

3.4.4. The Criteria considered Important when Selecting People with Disabilities

Figure 3.8. *The percentage of employers who rated the selection criteria as important, minimally important or not important.*



Employers were asked to rate the importance of age, education, experience, medical history, personal attributes, and any *other* influential factors in the selection process for people with disabilities. The five point scale used to

rate the importance of each factor was then combined into three categories: important, minimal importance and not important (refer to the method section for details). As outlined in figure 3.8, proportionally more employers rated age of minimal importance, while personal attributes, education, and experience were all rated as important. Although the majority of employers rated the *medical* category as important, it was proportionally less important than the preceding items. Every item identified in the *other* category was rated as important (for these items refer to table 3.15).

Table 3.15. *Other selection criteria identified as important to employers with and those with no experience of people with disabilities.*

Other Selection Criteria	Employment Practice (experience)		Total
	Do Employ	Do NOT Employ	
Initiative	0	1	1
Ability	4	4	8
Relevant Qualifications	1	0	1
People and Communication Skills	4	2	6
Best Person for the Job	1	0	1
Attitude	2	1	3
Mobility	1	0	1
Reliability	0	1	1
Disability	1	1	2
Appearance	2	0	2

Table 3.15. (contd.).

Other Selection Criteria	Employment Practice (experience)		Total
	Do Employ	Do NOT Employ	
Acceptable to Public/Employees	1	0	1
Sick Leave	1	0	1
Intelligence	2	0	2
Ability to Cope with Stress	1	0	1
Non-Smoker	1	0	1
Total	22*	10	32

* One employer identified three *other* criteria important in the selection process.

Table 3.16. compares current employment practice (do employ vs. do not employ) with the level of importance of the selection criteria (important, minimal importance, or not important). A separate chi-square test (2x3) of homogeneity was implemented on all five of the selection criteria (age, personal attributes, education, experience and medical). In each case the null hypothesis stated that the current employment practice was independent of the level of importance, with the alternative hypothesis being that the level of importance was not independent of the employment practice. Refer to appendix C for the chi-square value of each selection criteria. Age was the only variable which was found to vary, depending on the employment practices of employers. Those who did employ people with disabilities were less likely to rate age as important than were those who did not employ people with disabilities. However, on the

remaining selection criteria (education, experience, medical and personal attributes) no difference was found between employment practice and the level of importance.

Table 3.16. *The level of importance of the selection criteria by the employment practice of employers.*

Selection Criteria	Employment Practice (employer)	Level of Importance			Significance (p)
		Important	Minimal Importance	Not Important	
Age	Yes	11.8%	42.1%	46.1%	.05
	No	25.8%	44.9%	29.2%	
Personal Attribute	Yes	94.8%	5.2%	0%	invalid
	No	96.7%	0%	3.3%	
Education	Yes	78.9%	15.8%	5.3%	n.s.
	No	85.4%	12.4%	2.2%	
Experience	Yes	71.1%	17.1%	11.8%	n.s.
	No	68.1%	17.6%	14.3%	
Medical	Yes	34.2%	40.8%	25.0%	n.s.
	No	47.7%	26.1%	26.1%	
Yes: did employ (employers with experience).		No: did not employ (no experience).			

3.5. The Visibility of a Disability

A key reason for targeting the service industries was to examine the relationship between an employee's disability and his/her position in a firm (job). The general feeling was that people with more obvious disabilities would be less likely to be employed in positions which required face-to-face contact with clients, customers or the public. This was explored in question seven of the employee profile section. In the first part, employers were asked to determine whether the employee was required to deal with customers, clients or the public. Information was then categorised specifically, according to the amount and type of contact each employee had with customers, clients or the public.

The list of disabilities was divided into obvious and non-obvious⁷ (for the list of disabilities refer to appendix B). Obvious disabilities were those which the untrained observer could actually see or which became readily apparent when interacting with the disabled person. By contrast, non-obvious disabilities could not be seen by the untrained observer and were more difficult to detect when interacting with the person with the disability. No allowance was made for the severity⁸ of the disability. Consequently, the obviousness of a disability was judged according to what was considered to be a moderate example of each particular disability.

⁷ These terms are similar to the other description, visible and non-visible disabilities.

⁸ In this instance severity was used to refer to the degree of variance within rather than between each disability (mild, moderate, or severe disability).

3.5.1. Which of the Employees have Contact

The majority of employees with disabilities worked in positions in which they were required to have some form of contact with customers, clients or the public. Of the employees with disabilities, 79.7 percent had some form of contact with customers, clients or the public, while only 20.3 percent had no contact. Table 3.17. compares the obviousness of the disability (obvious vs. non-obvious) with the degree of contact which the employee had with customers, clients or the public (contact, or no contact). A chi-square test (2x2) of homogeneity was performed on the data, with the null hypothesis being that disability was independent of contact. The alternative hypothesis stated that contact was not independent of disability. The chi-square value was statistically significant so the null hypothesis was rejected ($\chi^2(1, N = 158) = 5.00, p < .05$). In fact, the results indicated that the degree of contact depended on the obviousness of the disability, so employees who had obvious disabilities were less likely to hold positions which required contact with customers, clients or the public.

Table 3.17. *Percentage of employees with obvious and non-obvious disabilities by the contact with customers, clients or the public.*

Disability	Contact	No Contact	Total
Obvious	71.8%	28.2%	100.0%
Not Obvious	86.2%	13.8%	100.0%

Table 3.18 compares employees (by disability type) with obvious disabilities and those who have non-obvious disabilities who do not have contact with customers, clients or the public. Slightly more employees with obvious disabilities worked in positions which did not require them to have any contact with the customers, clients or the public, than those with non-obvious disabilities.

Table 3.18. *Employees with obvious and non-obvious disabilities who do not have contact with customers, clients or the public.*

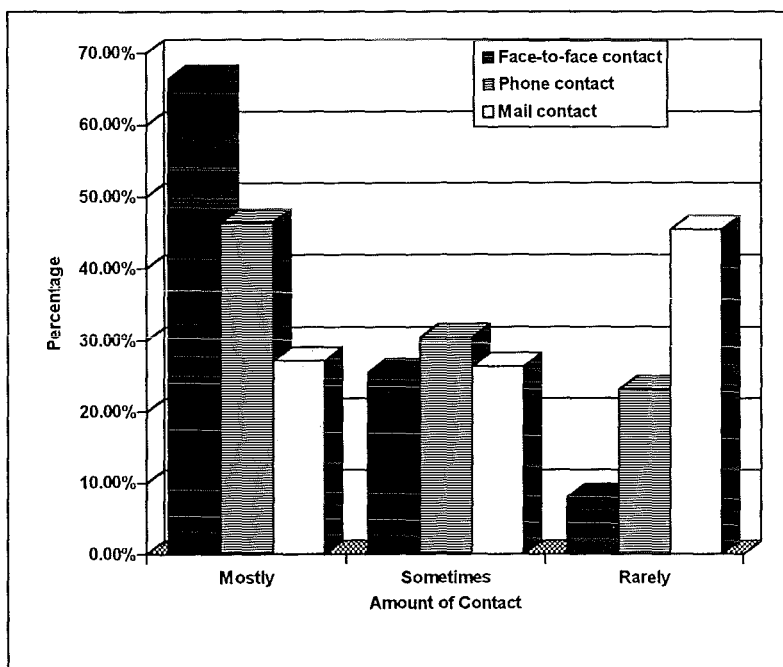
Obvious Disabilities	Number	Non-Obvious Disabilities	Number
Deaf/Hearing Impaired	12	Arthritis	2
Spina Bifida	1	Learning Disability	1
Amputation	2	Mental Retardation	3
Down's Syndrome	3	Diabetes*	1
Behavioural-Emotional Impairment	1	Cancer	1
Polio	1	RSI/OOS	2
		Epilepsy	2
		Mental Illness	1
Total	20	Total	12

* This person had a double disability.

3.5.2. The Extent of Contact between Employees and Customers, Clients or the Public.

Employers were asked to rate whether each employee *mostly*, *sometimes* or *rarely* had face-to-face contact, phone contact and mail contact with customers, clients or the public. Figure 3.9. illustrates the proportion of employees who mostly, sometimes, or rarely had face-to-face, phone and mail contact. A greater percentage of employees with disabilities were described as mostly having face-to-face contact and phone contact but rarely having mail contact with customers, clients or the public.

Figure 3.9. *The percentage of disabled employees who had face-to-face, phone and mail contact with customers, clients and the public.*



Figures 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12. illustrate the relationship between disability (obvious vs. non-obvious) and the amount of contact (mostly, sometimes, or rarely). Separate chi-square tests (2x3) of homogeneity were performed for each type of contact (face-to-face, phone and mail) to test the relationship between the disability and the amount of contact. In all three cases the null hypothesis was that disability was independent of the amount of contact. The alternative hypothesis stated that the amount of contact was not independent of the disability. Given the chi-square values, the null hypothesis was not rejected in any of the three cases (face-to-face contact ($\chi^2 (2, N = 125) = .52, ns$), phone contact ($\chi^2 (2, N = 125) = 1.92, ns$) and mail contact ($\chi^2 (2, N = 125) = 3.25, ns$). Although there were not significantly more employees with non-obvious disabilities who were described as mostly having face-to-face, phone and mail contact, the results tended towards this direction.

Figure 3.10. *The proportion of employees who mostly, sometimes, or rarely have face-to-face contact.*

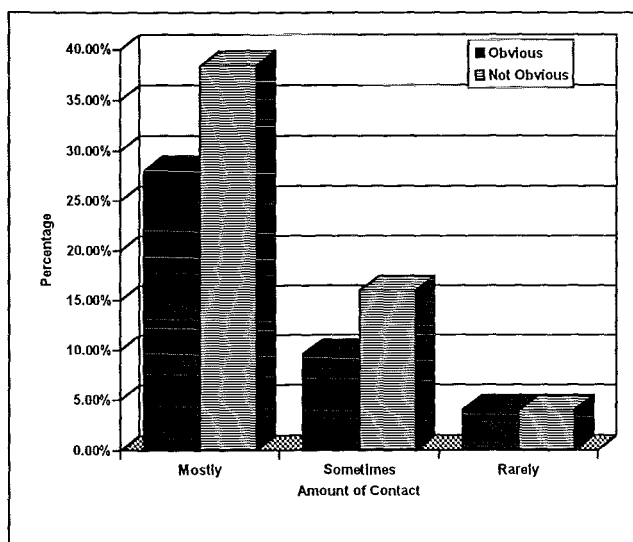


Figure 3.11. *The proportion of employees who mostly, sometimes, or rarely have mail contact.*

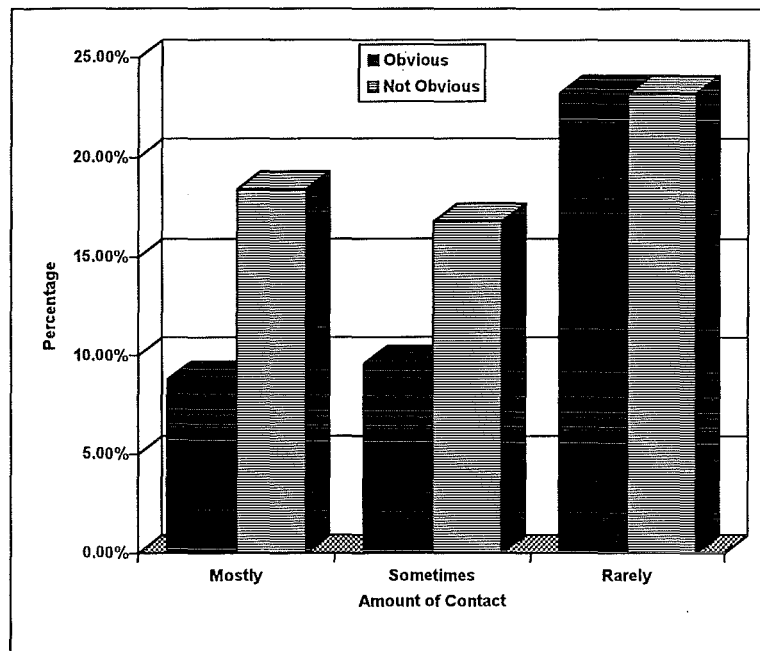
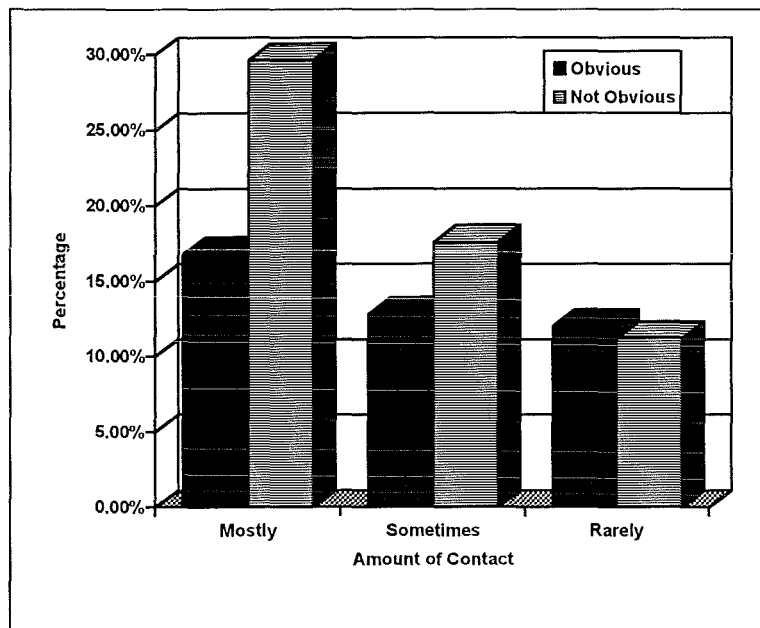


Figure 3.12. *The proportion of employees who mostly, sometimes, or rarely have phone contact.*



3.6. General Employment Information on Employees with Disabilities

3.6.1. Occupational Status of Employees with Disabilities

Occupations were grouped in accordance with the New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 1990 (NZSCO90), which is a skills based classification system. The NZSCO90 has grouped jobs according to the range and complexity of the tasks (skill level) and the degree of specialist knowledge required (skill specialisation). This has resulted in ten major occupational groups. As outlined in table 3.19 employees with disabilities held a range of positions that spanned nine of the ten major occupational groups.

The majority of employees with disabilities were employed in clerical occupations. This group included secretaries, typists, accounts clerks, cashiers, tellers and receptionists. The NZSCO90 describes these positions as not requiring formal education. The next largest group was that of service and sales workers. This covered personal and protective service workers, as well as salespeople, demonstrators and models.

Table 3.19. *Percentage of employees with disabilities by occupational groups.*

Occupation	Total
Legislators, Administrators, Managers.	8.9%
Professionals	7.0%
Technicians, Associate Professionals.	5.7%
Clerks.	38.0%
Service, Sales Workers.	18.4%
Agriculture, Fishery Workers.	3.2%
Trades Workers.	3.2%
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers.	8.2%
Elementary Occupations.	7.6%
Total	100.2%

The remaining 42 percent of employees with disabilities held positions in the other seven occupational groups. There were no major differences between these groups, with percentage within these occupations accounting for between 2.5 percent and nine percent of employees with disabilities. Employees in the following three groups (legislators, administrators, managers; professionals; and technicians, associates professionals) held positions which were identified by the

NZSCO90 as usually requiring a university degree and often experience. By contrast, the remaining four occupational groups (agriculture, fishery workers; trades workers; plant and machine operators and assemblers; and elementary occupations) covered positions which were more likely to involve on-the-job training and trade certification.

Table 3.20 provides a comparison between the age, gender and race of employees with disabilities with that of their occupational status. The most marked differences between the occupations of men and women were in the *clerks'* group where positions were held predominantly by women. By contrast, men dominated in the following groups: technicians, associate professionals; plant and machine operators and assemblers; and elementary occupations.

It was difficult to draw any conclusions based on racial differences between the occupational groups as there were very few employees with disabilities who had an ethnic identity other than pakeha/European. Similarly, the distribution of occupation by age is relatively consistent with the general age distribution. Of interest was the greater number of employees with disabilities in the 20-34 year age group who were employed in legislative, administrative, and managerial occupations.

Table 3.20. Occupational groups of employees with disabilities by age, gender and race.

Occupation	Age (in years)					Race		Gender			
	0-19	20-34	35-49	50+	Total	Pakeha	Other	Total	Male	Female	Total
Legislators, Administrators, Managers.	0%	6.5%	1.3%	1.3%	9.1%	9.0%	0%	9.0%	3.9%	5.1%	9.0%
Professionals	0%	2.6%	1.95%	1.95%	6.5%	6.5%	0%	6.5%	2.6%	3.8%	6.4%
Technicians, Associate Professionals.	1.3%	2.6%	1.3%	0.6%	5.8%	5.8%	0%	5.8%	4.5%	1.3%	5.8%
Clerks.	1.3%	20.1%	13.6%	3.2%	38.3%	37.5%	0.6%	38.1%	12.2%	25.6%	37.8%
Service, Sales Workers.	1.3%	9.1%	5.2%	3.2%	18.8%	18.1%	0.6%	18.7%	9.0%	9.6%	18.6%
Agriculture, Fishery Workers.	0%	0%	1.95%	0.65%	12.6%	3.2%	0%	3.2%	3.2%	0%	3.2%
Trades Workers.	0%	1.3%	.6%	1.3%	3.2%	3.2%	0%	3.2%	2.6%	0.6%	3.2%
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers.	0%	3.9%	3.9%	0.6%	8.4%	7.8%	0.6%	8.4%	6.4%	1.9%	8.3%
Elementary Occupations.	0%	4.5%	1.3%	1.3%	7.1%	7.1%	0%	7.1%	6.4%	1.3%	7.7%
Total	3.9%	50.6%	31.2%	14.3%	100.0%	98.1%	1.9%	100.0%	50.6%	49.4%	100.0%

3.6.2. Distribution of Hours Worked by Employees with Disabilities.

By far the largest number of employees with disabilities worked between 31 and 40 hours a week. As outlined in table 3.21, slightly over 50.3 percent of employees with disabilities worked these hours, while 31.8 percent worked under 30 hours per week, and 17.8 percent over 40 hours per week.

Table 3.21. *Percentage of hours worked per week by employees with disabilities.*

Hours of Work (per week)	Percentage
1-10	10.2%
11-20	10.8%
21-30	10.8%
31-40	50.3%
41+	17.8%
Total	100.0%

Table 3.22. draws further comparisons between the hours worked by employees with disabilities with their age, race and gender. Of particular interest were the differences between men and women. As shown in this table there was a tendency for women to work less than 21 hours per week, while men were slightly more likely to work over 31 hours per week.

Table 3.22. *Hours worked by people with disabilities by age, race and gender.*

Hours	Age (in years)					Race			Gender		
	0-19	20-34	35-49	50+	Total	Pakeha	Other	Total	Male	Female	Total
1-10	0.6%	3.2%	4.5%	1.3%	9.7%	10.3%	0%	10.3%	5.7%	4.5%	10.2%
11-20	0.6%	6.5%	2.6%	1.3%	11.0%	10.9%	0%	10.9%	1.9%	8.9%	10.8%
21-30	0%	4.5%	3.9%	2.6%	11.0%	10.9%	0%	10.9%	5.1%	5.7%	10.8%
31-40	1.9%	28.4%	15.5%	4.5%	50.3%	48.7%	1.3%	50.0%	26.8%	23.6%	50.3%
41+	0.6%	8.4%	4.5%	4.5%	18.1%	17.3%	0.6%	17.9%	10.8%	7.0%	17.8%
Total	3.9%	51.9%	31.0%	14.2%	100.0%	98.1%	1.3%	100.0%	50.3%	49.7%	100.0%

3.6.3. The Composition of Disability Categories in Employment

Disabilities were grouped according to four main types of impairment: physical, sensory-neurological, cognitive-developmental and emotional-behavioural. As outlined in table 3.23, most disabled employees had some form of physical impairment (51.25%). This was then followed by employees with sensory-neurological (30.0%), cognitive-developmental (13.75%) and emotional-behavioural impairments (5.0%)

Table 3.23. *Percentage of people with disabilities per disability category.*

Disability Category	Percentage
Physical	51.25%
Sensory-Neurological	30.0%
Cognitive-Developmental	13.75%
Emotional-Behavioural	5.0%
Total	100.0%

Tables 3.24 and 3.25 provide a comparison of the age, gender and race of disabled employees based on the disability categories. Although there were more women than men with physical impairments, the number of men with sensory-neurological, cognitive-developmental and emotional-behavioural impairments was greater than that of women.

Table 3.24: *The disability categories according to age.*

Disability Categories	Age (in years)				Total
	0-19	20-34	35-49	50+	
Physical	1.9%	24.1%	16.5%	8.9%	51.3%
Sensory-Neurological	0.6%	17.7%	9.5%	2.5%	30.4%
Cognitive-Developmental	0.6%	8.2%	3.2%	1.3%	13.3%
Emotional-Behavioural	0.6%	1.9%	1.3%	1.3%	5.1%
Total	3.8%	51.9%	30.4%	13.9%	100.0%

Table 3.25. *The disability categories according to race and gender.*

Disability Categories	Race			Gender		
	Pakeha	Other	Total	Male	Female	Total
Physical	50.9%	0.6%	51.6%	20.0%	31.3%	51.3%
Sensory-Neurological	29.6%	0.6%	30.2%	18.1%	11.9%	30.0%
Cognitive-Developmental	12.6%	0.6%	5.0%	9.4%	4.4%	13.8%
Emotional-Behavioural	5.0%	0%	5.0%	3.1%	1.9%	5.0%
Total	98.1%	1.9%	100.0%	50.6%	49.4%	100.0%

The age distribution of employees with disabilities tended to be relatively consistent across all four disability categories, with the greatest number of employees in the 20-34 year age group. There were very few Maori and Asian employees with disabilities who had physical, sensory-neurological or cognitive-developmental impairments.

3.6.4. The Type of Modifications made by Employers

The majority of modifications made by employers to accommodate employees with disabilities were relatively minor, and so were not excessively expensive. Of the 160 employees with disabilities, employers had only to make accommodations for 31 of them. Table 3.26 outlines what modifications were made and how much they cost the employer.

Table 3.26. *The cost and nature of the modifications made to accommodate employee with disabilities.*

Type of Modification	Number	Amount Spent (in dollars)
Additional lighting	2	\$120
Ramp	1	Minimal
Arm rests, pen holders, work place adjustments	4	\$300-\$450
Extra time spent in communicating with employee	1	Minimal

Table 3.26. (contd.).

Type of Modification	Number	Amount Spent (in dollars)
New furniture	9	\$1,000-\$2,000
Changed workplace	4	Minimal
Extra supervision	1	Minimal
Altering the location of heavy products and shelves	1	Minimal
Making room for nebuliser	1	Minimal
Parking space	1	\$32 per week
Large print labelling and more orally communicated instructions	1	Minimal
Makes phone calls on behalf of employee	1	Minimal
Retrained for new job	2	Minimal
Visual aids	1	Minimal
Automatic rather than manual car	1	Minimal
Total	31	

3.6.5. Employees with Disabilities - How do they Rate as Employees?

Employers were asked to rate their employees with disabilities on six employment related issues, using the standards they would expect from their employees (green section,

People with Disabilities in Employment, question eight). As discussed in the method section, a seven point rating scale was used to rate employees with disabilities on the following issues: level of productivity; amount of absenteeism; ability to learn new skills; co-operation with fellow employees; ability to follow supervisor's instructions; and ability to communicate with fellow employees.

For each of the six employment issues a chi-square test (goodness-of-fit) was performed with the null hypothesis being that each point on the scale (1-7) was equally distributed, the alternative hypothesis stating that each rating scale was not equally distributed. The chi-square test for each of the employment items was statistically significant and so, the null hypothesis was rejected. In most cases employees received positive ratings which tended to be at the 'excellent' rather than the 'poor' end of the scale. In fact, the majority of employees with disabilities were never absent or almost never absent from work ($\chi^2 (6, N = 163) = 205.19, p < .01$), would follow the instructions of their supervisor ($\chi^2 (6, N = 153) = 159.44, p < .01$), were mostly productive ($\chi^2 (5, N = 156) = 133.46, p < .01$), would co-operate with fellow employees ($\chi^2 (6, N = 152) = 158.12, p < .01$), were able to communicate well with fellow employees ($\chi^2 (6, N = 154) = 108.18, p < .01$) and were relatively quick to learn new skills ($\chi^2 (6, N = 154) = 84.45, p < .01$).

3.7. Looking to the Future

Employers were asked to indicate whether they would be likely to employ people with disabilities in the near future. Table 3.27. summarises the employers' responses. The majority of employers (50.8%) were not sure whether they would be likely to employ people with disabilities in the future (the *do not know* category) followed by 31.8% who thought that they would *not*, while only 17.3% committed themselves to employing people with disabilities in the future.

Table 3.27. *The percentage of employers willing to employ people with disabilities in the near future.*

Employers' Willingness to Employ People with Disabilities in the Future.	Percentage
Yes, will employ in the future	17.3%
No, will NOT employ in the future	31.8%
Don't know if they will employ in the future	50.8%
Total	100.0%

Table 3.28. compares current employment practices (do employ vs. do not employ) with the willingness of employers to employ people with disabilities in the future (yes, no, or don't know). A chi-square test (2x3) of homogeneity was performed on the data with the null hypothesis being that employment

practice was independent of the future willingness to employ. The alternative hypothesis stated that future willingness was not independent of the employment practice. The chi-square value was statistically significant (χ^2 (2, $N = 179$) = 27.74, $p < .01$) so the null hypothesis was rejected. Employers with experience of employing people with disabilities were more likely to indicate that they would employ such people in the future than were employers with no experience.

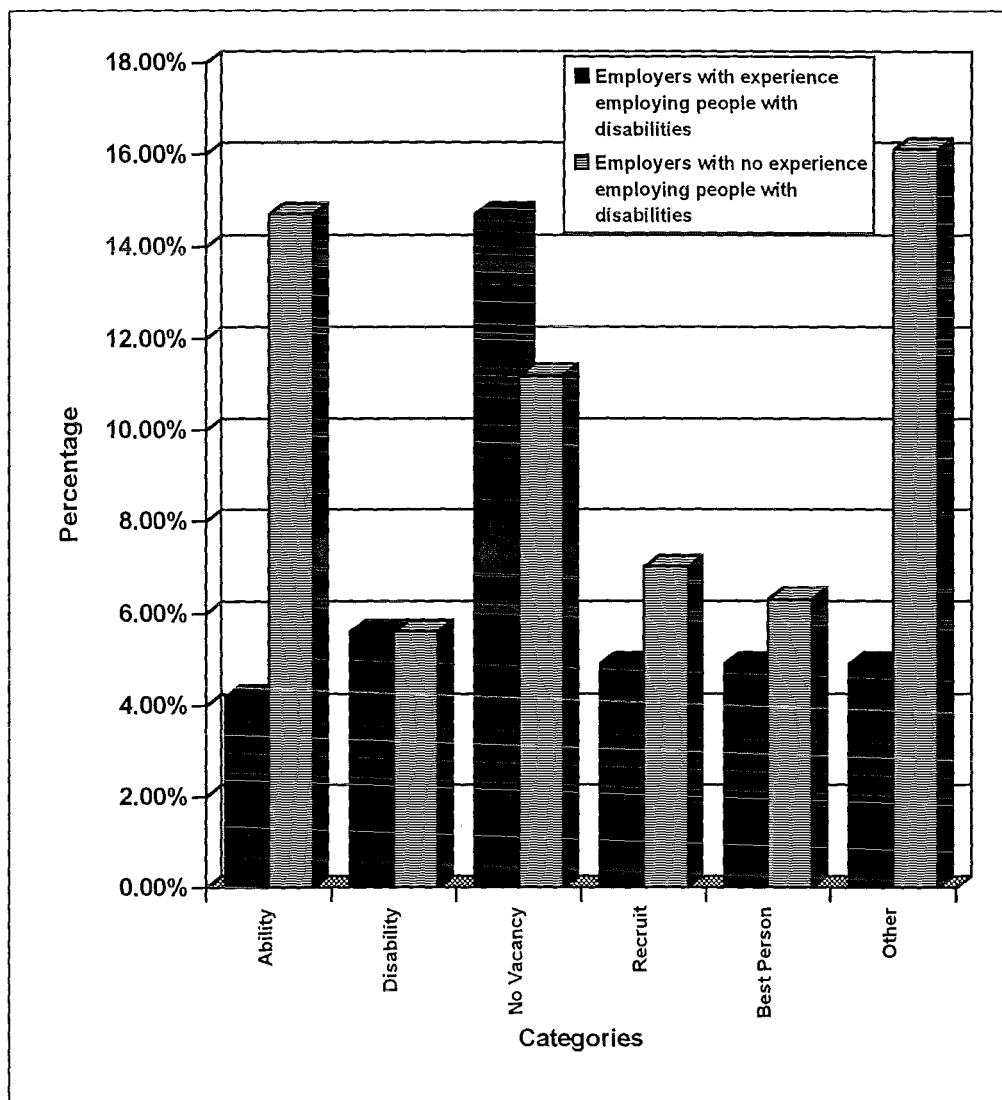
Table 3.28. *The proportion of employers willing to employ people with disabilities in the future with relation to their experience of people with disabilities.*

Employment Practice (experience of employers)	Employers' Willingness to Employ People with Disabilities in the Future			Total
	Yes, will employ	No, will NOT employ	Don't know if will employ	
Do employ people with disabilities	27.3%	11.7%	61.0%	100.0%
Do NOT employ people with disabilities	9.8%	47.1%	43.1%	100.0%

There were a number of reasons why employers were uncertain about the future employment of people with disabilities. Their comments were grouped according to the following topics: the ability of the employee, the

person's disability, no vacancies in the firm, the firm does not actively recruit people with disabilities/people with disabilities do not apply for jobs, the firm selects the best person for the job, and an *other* category. Figure 3.13. summarises the distribution of comments by categories.

Figure 3.13. *The proportion of employers with and those with no experience in relation to the explanations given for wanting to employ people with disabilities in the future.*



The most frequently given reason for not employing people with disabilities in the future was that the firm had no vacancies. This accounted for just over a quarter of the explanations (25.9%). Based on the level of experience of employers, 14.7 percent of employers with experience remarked on the vacancy issue, while 11.2 percent of employers with no experience made similar comments. Typical remarks were as follows:

“No vacancies foreseen for 12 months” - experience

“With the current employment situation, the bank has been in a continual “down size” “non recruitment” mode so it’s hard to say”

- experience

“We have only a small team that stay for many years”

- no experience

A total of 18.9 percent of employers cited ability as a key reason for not employing a person with a disability. Employers with no experience were more concerned with ability than were those with experience (14.7 percent and 4.2 percent respectively). The following are examples of comments on the ability of an employee with a disability:

“Any disabled person would have to have some exceptional talents for us to consider him or her.” - no experience

“Non-specialist skills jobs are very few if we needed someone in areas of lower skill level we would consider a disabled person. If a disabled person had the required skills we would also consider them - so far neither scenario has occurred.” - no experience

“The nature of our business calls for multi tasking. We could not have a person doing one task only. Our environment is a highly stressed one.”

- experience

The *recruit* category accounted for 11.9 percent of the explanations, with 4.9 percent from employers with experience of employees with disabilities and 7 percent from those with no experience. Comments typically focused on the fact that firms did not actively recruit people with disabilities, or that people with disabilities did not apply for positions as illustrated by the following:

“We have never been approached by such people and thus have never been confronted with this decision.”

- no experience

“Don’t actively recruit disabled people - decision made on applications received - don’t receive any applications from disabled people.”

- experience

The same number of employers with (5.6%) and with no (5.6%) experience of disabled employees expressed concern over the person's disability. The following are examples of their comments:

“It would depend on the particular disability ...” - no experience

“...we have not been asked to employ someone with a severe disability. However we employ an asthmatic and another with back injury both of which we don’t regard as disabilities for our type of employment.”

- experience

“It would depend very greatly on the type of disability but in general it is unlikely we would employ persons in most of the categories listed.”

- no experience

“Disability is only ONE factor in a persons makeup.”

- experience

The *job explanations* category received an equivalent rating to the *disability* category (11.2 percent). In this category 4.9 percent of employers

with experience and 6.3 percent of employers with no experience indicated that they did not know if they would employ people with disabilities in the future because future recruitment was based on selection of the *best person* for the job. The following illustrate typical comments:

"Our primary reason for employing anyone is "can they do the job" if they can disabled or not, they will be employed."

- no experience

"... if the right person has the right skills they will get the job and disabilities don't come into it."

- experience

"We would welcome all applicants and in some cases a "handicapped" person could be advantaged - i.e. we may find it would stretch students to have a good range of tutors."

- no experience

The majority of comments in the *other* category were made by employers with no experience of employees with disabilities. Of the 21 percent of comments in this category, 16.1 percent were from employers with no experience, while the remaining 4.9 percent were from employers with experience. The following reasons were given for not employing people with disabilities in the future: access; industrial standards; safety; concern over the

reaction of customers, clients or the public; no suitable work; size; profit and it depends on the circumstances. Examples of these are as follows:

“It is impossible for someone to work in this environment who has a disability. The only job may be as a dental receptionist.”

- no experience

“Because we only employ family”

- no experience

“It totally depends on the company structure at each season - i.e. winter-summer, and if we need to find employees to fill these areas. We will consider anyone, as long as they fit the bill.”

- experience

“People with disabilities are generally (not always) reliant on others and this fact makes all parties less profitable. This seems a hard line to take, but people in business are there to make a profit. There will, unfortunately for the disabled person, always be a non-disabled person to compete with.”

- no experience

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

4.1. Attitudes of Employers

One of the main purposes for this study was to investigate the attitudes of employers towards people with disabilities. As predicted, employers who had had experience of employing people with disabilities had more positive attitudes than did employers with no experience. To ascertain employer's attitudes the following employment issues were investigated: the employment of people with specific disabilities, the likelihood of employing people with disabilities in the future, the willingness to make workplace accommodations for people with disabilities and criteria for selecting people with disabilities (refer to section 3.4). Positive attitudes were deemed to exist when employers displayed more willingness to accept, employ and treat people with disabilities in an equivalent manner to the non-disabled.

4.1.1. The Employment of People with Specific Disabilities

As predicted by hypothesis one, employers who had had the experience of employing people with disabilities had more positive attitudes towards them than did employers with no experience. The results confirmed this hypothesis

for the variable, willingness to employ people with disabilities. These findings are in line with several other studies in which the expressed willingness of employers to employ people with disabilities was greater when employers had had experience with disabled people (Wilgosh and Skaret, 1987; Wilgosh and Mueller, 1989; Minskoff, Sautter, Hoffman and Hawks, 1987).

A more detailed analysis of the answers given by employers revealed there were certain disabilities employers were prepared to employ. Again results tended to be affected by whether an employer had experience. Generally, employers preferred not to employ people with the more 'traditionally defined' disabilities. That is, those impairments which for a long time have been considered to come under the umbrella of disability, such as paraplegia, spina bifida, blindness/visual impairment, mental retardation and so on. However, employers were more willing to employ people with the non-traditionally defined disabilities such as asthma, arthritis, cancer, back injury and RSI/OOS. These are the disabilities which include those impairments which have more typically been thought of as health problems associated with illness rather than disability. Those with experience were more willing to employ people with both traditional and non-traditional disabilities than were those with no experience.

The perceived employability of people with disabilities could be measured along a continuum based on the preference of employers. At one end

of the continuum would be those people who have disabilities which employers are more willing to employ, such as asthmatics, those who have arthritis, cancer, RSI/OOS, back injury, congenital deformity of the limb(s), amputees. Of marginal preference would be people who have had strokes, diabetes or epilepsy. By contrast, at the other end of the continuum would be those people whom employers are least likely to employ. The list would be headed by autistic person, followed by those with mental retardation, tetraplegia, behavioural-emotional impairment, CNS disease, Down's Syndrome, traumatic brain injury, mental illness, blind/visually impaired, brain deformity, fetal alcohol syndrome, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, paraplegia, learning disabilities, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, polio, or deaf/hearing impairments.

Employers' perceptions of people with specific disabilities affect their employment potential, to the extent that people with traditional disabilities are more likely to face greater barriers than those with non-traditional disabilities. Studies which have compared people with different disabilities have found that the attitudes of employers vary according to the disability (Johnson, Greenwood & Schriener, 1988; Bowman, 1987; and Thomas & Thomas, 1985). Bowman (1987), for example, found that people with disabilities such as facial disfigurement and former alcoholism were perceived as more competent than were people with cerebral palsy and mental retardation. This also fits with the finding that employers are more receptive to people with non-traditional than traditional disabilities.

Employers who lacked experience and knowledge of people with disabilities were less willing to hire them. This result is supported by other research (Minskoff et al., 1987; Wilgosh and Mueller, 1989). Employers gave different explanations for not wanting to employ people with disabilities. Those with no experience expressed greater concern about whether or not a disabled person would have sufficient ability to meet the requirements of the work/job. Employers often expressed doubt about the competency of an employee to perform in a productive manner and to complete every task or requirement of the job. These comments seem to reflect the employers' inexperience and limited knowledge of disability. Such attitudes are not unique but were similar to the results of other studies (Nathanson, 1977; Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987; Kittingham, 1982; Bascand, 1987; Johnson, Greenwood & Schriener, 1988).

Both employers with experience and those without expressed concern about the relationship between people with disabilities and customers, clients or the public. Employers saw problems when people with disabilities had to deal with customers, clients or the public. The feeling was that the appearance of people with disabilities would upset the public because society has come to expect normality of appearance. Several studies have investigated the significance of the impact of appearance during the selection process (Christman & Branson, 1990; Christman & Slaten, 1991; Tse, 1994). Although not directly related to the expressed concern of employers it does have some bearing. In

particular, the influence of appearance in the selection process can be compared to employers' perceptions of appearance in relation to the job/position. Employees with obvious disabilities were perceived as likely to harm the business potential of the firm where they had to deal with customers, clients or the public.

4.1.2. The Willingness of Employers to Accommodate People with Disabilities

Another area where support was found for the hypothesis, employers with experience would hold more positive attitudes than employers with no experience, was in the willingness to make workplace modifications to accommodate those with disabilities. Those employers with no experience were less willing to make modifications, a result similar to other research findings. As Nathanson (1977) observed employers often share a misperception that accommodating people with disabilities is an expensive venture and will require extensive renovations.

Of those willing to make workplace modifications, employers with experience were prepared to spend more than those with no experience. This difference may well reflect the lack of knowledge and understanding of employers with no experience, who were generally less informed about the type of modifications required, and their subsequent costs. By contrast, employers

with experience made more realistic estimates of the potential costs of workplace modifications and were more willing to spend more money than were employers with no experience. Such an attitude sends a positive message and appears to be an expression of their greater understanding of the benefits of employing people with disabilities. As has been found in other studies, workplace modifications were usually relatively minor and inexpensive (Nathanson, 1977; Ascraft, 1979; Parent & Everson, 1986; Friedman, 1993).

4.1.3. The Criteria Important for Selecting People with Disabilities

The selection process is very important for anyone seeking employment. This process is probably even more crucial for people with disabilities, as so many do not even get to, let alone go beyond, this point. The importance of this process was reinforced by the way in which employers rated four of the five selection attributes. Within this area there was very little difference between employers with and those without experience. Those with experience were only slightly less likely to rate personal attributes, education, experience and medical factors as important, although they did rate age as less important. As discussed by Barnes (1992) pre-employment medical tests, education level, age, and experience are all important selection criteria which employers use to assess the employment potential of a job applicant. On this basis employees with disabilities are usually perceived as less employable than their non-disabled

counterparts and, consequently, have more difficulties seeking and gaining employment (Barnes, 1992).

Just as non-disabled people must present well for a job so, too, must those with disabilities. This means having good personal attributes, an appropriate level of education, relevant experience and a good medical history. The major stumbling block for people with disabilities was the employer's perception of their medical history. Employers usually associate disability with illness and this is subsequently equated with higher than acceptable levels of absenteeism and turnover, greater safety risks and lower productivity. As a large number of studies have shown, employers are concerned about the safety, reliability and productivity of people with disabilities, because they associate disability with inability and cost (Nathanson, 1977; Pati, 1978; Wysocki & Wysocki, 1979; Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987; Kittingham, 1982; Bascand, 1987). Although these concerns are largely unfounded, employers believe them to be true and make selection decisions accordingly. It appears that employers have more negative attitudes towards people with disabilities when they see disability as an illness. Not only are employers with no experience susceptible to this misperception but so, too, are employers with experience.

4.1.4. Likelihood of Employing People with Disabilities in the Future

Generally speaking, employers did not commit themselves to any future employment intentions with respect to people with disabilities, although there were some differences between employers with and those without experience. Those with experience were more likely to express a willingness to employ people with disabilities in the future. This outcome provides further support for the hypothesis that experience equates to positive attitudes. So employers who had had experience were more receptive to the possibility of employing people with disabilities at some time in the future. Again this finding supports the results of other studies (Lyth, 1973; Wilgosh & Skaret, 1987; Wilgosh and Mueller, 1989; Minskoff et al., 1987). Wilgosh and Mueller (1989) found that employers who had employed individuals with mental disabilities were more willing to employ them in the future than were those with no experience.

In understanding the differences in attitudes between employers it is helpful to look at their reasons for not wanting to make a commitment to hire people with disabilities at some time in the future. The major reason for not hiring people with disabilities was because employers foresaw no employment vacancies. Although in some instances this may be true, employers may actually be using this apparently legitimate reason to distance themselves from the possibility of employing people with disabilities while, at the same time not

wanting to appear to be discriminatory. This argument could also be applied to other reasons given by employers, such as the low numbers of applicants who had disabilities, or the lack of any actual recruitment programme directed at people with disabilities. As Barnes (1992) suggested, when it comes to actually being confronted with the decision of whether or not to hire people with disabilities, employers are excellent at providing a number of apparently legitimate excuses.

Of particular concern to employers with no experience was what they saw as the inability of the people with disabilities. Employers typically commented on the lack of skills and the inability of people with disabilities. They also expressed concern over the lack of suitable jobs. Jobs deemed suitable for people with disabilities were not demanding and required only a low level of skill. These perceptions are not confined to the employers in this study. Rather, they are highly relevant to the issues surrounding disability and employment and are strongly reinforced by the high level of underemployment among people with disabilities (Barnes, 1992).

Employers who were prepared to employ the *best person* for the job showed more positive attitudes because their decisions were based on the individual's skills and ability rather than his/her disability and its perceived limitations.

4.2. The Visibility of a Disability

Support was found for the fourth hypothesis which predicted that people with non-obvious disabilities were more likely to be employed in positions which required face-to-face contact with the customers, clients or the public. Although not significant, the trend was that people with obvious disabilities were less likely to be engaged in face-to-face, phone or mail contact with customers, clients or the public. Statistical significance may have been influenced by the degree of awareness of the disability. It may well be that some employers were not aware that their employees had disabilities. This would be especially so where those with non-obvious disabilities have not disclosed them to their employer.

The results of other studies supported this trend. Gouvier, Steiner, Jackson, Schlater & Rain (1991) found that people received lower job ratings when their disability was highly visible and they were involved in a lot of contact with the public. Bascand (1987) reported that employers were less receptive to people with visible disabilities, the reason being that employers believed the company image would suffer adversely if they employed people with visible disabilities.

Such attitudes could have a three fold impact on employment opportunities in the service industries for people with disabilities. Firstly,

people with obvious disabilities would be more likely to have greater difficulties finding employment than those with less obvious disabilities. This would be especially so if they want to work in a position which requires a high level of contact with the customers, clients or the public. A second implication is that, despite their more positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, employers with experience also have reservations about employing people with obvious disabilities. Finally, the effect of these decisions on people with disabilities could be far reaching. People with obvious disabilities may well experience greater difficulties establishing their careers and achieving recognition and promotion. However, an investigation of this hypothesis was beyond the scope of this research.

4.3. Gender and Ethnic Identity

Partial support was found for the prediction that the number of white males with disabilities in employment would be significantly higher than that of females and minority group members with disabilities. This was clearly evident when comparing the number of Pakeha/New Zealand European employees with disabilities against that of Maori and Asian employees with disabilities. However, although more males were expected to be employed there were, in fact, a similar number of males and females with disabilities in employment. The employment gap between Europeans and non-Europeans fits into the pattern of discrimination against people who belong to ethnic minorities (Pfeiffer, 1991;

Barnes, 1992). Some studies report that the gap between the employment levels of men and women with disabilities is smaller than the gap found in the general employment figures of men and women (Lonsdale, 1990; Bascand, 1987). A Wellington based study found that, of those people with disabilities who are employed, 57 percent were men and 43 percent were women (Bascand, 1987). However, others have found a higher rate of employment among men with disabilities than with women (Dunham, 1979; Kittingham, 1981; Stroombergen, Miller & Jensen, 1991). For example, in a Christchurch survey of employees with disabilities, 79 percent were males while only 21 percent were females (Kittingham, 1981). One study even reported a higher proportion of women than men with disabilities in employment (Pfeiffer, 1991), with 57 percent of the sample being women and 43 percent men.

It is difficult to determine whether or not these results reflect actual employment patterns because some studies have found higher employment levels among men than women with disabilities. As several studies reported (Bascand, 1987; Lonsdale, 1990; Pfeiffer, 1991) there may in fact be a similar number of men and women in the workforce. Alternatively, these figures may reflect the fact that more women with disabilities are employed in the service industries although, as Barnes (1992) observed, women are more often employed in the service sector.

Despite there being a similar number of males and females in the sample, their employment situations differed. Of particular interest were the comparisons between men and women with disabilities by industry, firm size (discussed in section 4.4.), hours of work and disability.

The figures show that there are some differences in the areas in which men and women with disabilities are employed and this could also account for differences in the occupational groups. With more men in the transportation, storage and communication industries and more women in social, personal and community services, it was not surprising to find that more men were employed as technicians, associate professionals, plant and machine operators and assemblers, and in elementary occupations, while more women were employed as clerks. It also appears that men and women with disabilities are likely to be employed in the more traditionally defined female and male industries and occupations. Vash (1982) found women tend to be employed in traditional female occupations, typically have low salaries, and hold positions without status. Similarly, Lonsdale (1990) reported that a higher proportion of women than men with disabilities and non-disabled women were in unskilled work.

Although most employees with disabilities were found to work over 31 hours per week, women were more likely than men to be working under 21 hours a week. Proportionally more men than women worked over 31 hours per week. These findings are similar to the 1991 census figures in which there were

approximately twice as many men as women in full-time¹ employment, and three times as many women as men in part-time² employment in the New Zealand labour force (New Zealand Department of Statistics, 1993). Among the disabled workforce Pfeiffer (1991) found more women with disabilities in part-time employment and a greater number of men with disabilities in full-time work.

Another factor which influences the employment status of people with disabilities is the nature of their disability. The majority of people with disabilities had physical impairments. Several reasons have been suggested and explain this phenomenon. Firstly, there is a school of thought that believes that people with physical disabilities, especially those obvious ones, are more likely to have their disabilities accepted by employers because employers can identify with this type of impairment. Conversely, there may be more people with physical disabilities and consequently a higher proportion actually seeking employment. The latter option seems less likely as it appears that employers are most receptive to people with physical disabilities (Johnson et al., 1988; Mithaug, 1979).

These arguments could also be applied to the employment differences of men and women with disabilities. As there were more women with physical

¹ Full-time employment is defined as 30 or more hours per week.

² Part-time employment is defined as between 1 - 29 hours per week.

disabilities than men, but fewer women than men with sensory-neurological, cognitive-developmental and emotional-behavioural disabilities, it appears that women with physical disabilities are more employable than those with other forms of impairment. Alternatively, there may in fact be proportionally more women who have physical disabilities than sensory-neurological, cognitive-developmental and emotional-behavioural disabilities as reflected in the patterns of employment.

4.4. Size of the Firms

Finally, support was found for the hypothesis large organisations were more likely to be employing people with disabilities followed by medium organisations, and lastly smaller organisations. This pattern was also noted by Bascand (1987), Kittingham (1981), Comb & Omvig (1986). For example, Comb and Omvig (1986) found that large firms were more willing to employ people with disabilities than were smaller ones. They suggested that it could reflect the fact that larger organisations have more resources and are more readily able to restructure jobs to suit the needs of people with disabilities. In New Zealand small businesses predominate so employment options for people with disabilities may not be as good, since smaller organisations were less receptive to the idea of employing people with disabilities.

4.5. People with Disabilities as Employees

Interestingly, employees with disabilities generally received excellent ratings on the six employment related issues. This is further enhanced by the frequently cited misperceptions of employers (Nathanson, 1977; Pati, 1979). These results were also in line with other research findings in which employees with disabilities have been found to be productive, co-operative, dependable and as able as their fellow non-disabled employees (Kittingham, 1981, Bascand, 1987).

4.6. Disability and Discrimination

The attitudes of employers are a hurdle which people with disabilities have to surmount. These attitudes are many and varied and frequently develop into behaviour which is discriminatory³. The research provides evidence of direct and indirect discrimination which manifests itself during the pre-employment, recruitment and selection stages, and during the term of employment. Discrimination is often moderated by aspects of the disability, such as the degree of its visibility, the level of severity⁴ and the type of disability.

³Discrimination was defined and outlined in the section 1.4, *Disability and Discrimination*. Refer to this for more details.

⁴In this instance, severity is used to refer to the degree to which different disabilities impair people.

There were several ways in which employers expressed either direct or indirect discrimination against people with disabilities. Employers who were unwilling to employ people with any one of the listed disabilities showed an immediate tendency towards discriminatory behaviour. Direct discrimination was exhibited in a number of ways. A large number of employers were prepared to make assumptions about the potential employability of an individual based on the individual's disability, without any actual knowledge of the individual's skills and qualifications. Frequently, employers made the judgement that people with more severe disabilities would not be suitable as employees. Such was the case with people described as tetraplegics. Employers were often not willing to even consider employing these people.

Although more difficult to detect, indirect forms of discrimination permeate a number of employment situations and decisions. Employers frequently presented a number of seemingly plausible reasons for not employing people with disabilities. For instance, employers often attributed their inability to employ people with disabilities to the nature of the work/job, the reactions of customers, clients or the public, and to the lack of access. In some cases they based the willingness to employ people with disabilities on their ability to gain access to the building. However, where there was no lift in a building employers saw this as an obstacle to employing a person in a wheelchair. These results are

supported by other studies and, as Barnes (1992) indicated, indirect discrimination manifests itself in a number of apparently legitimate situations.

Direct and indirect discrimination can exist both before and during employment and is often moderated by factors related to the disability, its severity and visibility. As discussed in section 4.1.1, employers were often more willing to employ people with non-traditional rather than traditional disabilities. Typically, people with back injuries, asthma or arthritis were thought to be more employable, than were people with cerebral palsy, mental illness or tetraplegia. Distinctions were made between the different types of disabilities and the different levels of severity. As reported in several other studies, these dimensions of disability influence the attitudes and behaviour of employers, to the extent that they can be said to be discriminating against people with disabilities (Hahn, 1985; Schmelkin, 1985; Johnson, 1986; Glendinning, 1991). The importance of investigating the multidimensional aspects of disability was outlined by Schmelkin (1985) who presented four dimensions of disability: specific versus diffuse, physical and behavioural-emotional versus cognitive disabilities, and visibility. Gouvier et al. (1991) explored the effects of these dimensions and found that people with more visible and neurologically based disabilities were rated as the least preferred employees.

During recruitment and selection employers make a number of judgements on the employment potential of the applicants. Often these

judgements are based on preconceived ideas and perceptions about various groups of people. Unfortunately, employers often hold negative attitudes towards people with disabilities, more especially towards those with visible disabilities, who are more likely not to be employed in positions which involved direct contact with the customers, clients or the public. This form of indirect discrimination was also observed by Gouvier et al. (1991), who found that employers gave a lower rating to people with visible disabilities when the job involved high contact with the public.

4.6.1. Disability as a Minority Group

People with disabilities are not unique in experiencing discrimination in employment. Parallels have been drawn between people with disabilities, women and ethnic minority groups. Common to all of these groups are prejudiced attitudes and discrimination, which in turn disadvantages them when they seek employment. However, discrimination on the basis of physical and behavioural differences is unique to people with disabilities. These attitudes reinforce functional limitations and the perception that people with disabilities are biologically inferior (Hahn, 1985). This attitude was strongly indicated when a comparison was done between people with obvious and non-obvious disabilities, in relation to the amount of contact they had with customers, clients or the public. Given that those with obvious disabilities were less likely to have direct contact with the customers, client or the public, appearance and the

inference of normalcy becomes an important criteria for a large number of the employers.

Minority group membership for people with disabilities gives rise to a phenomenon described as double discrimination. As discussed in section 1.4.1. double discrimination appears to be a straight forward term used to describe discrimination on the grounds of disability, as well as race, gender or age. In fact it is more complex. Morris (1993) has suggested that the effect of gender, disability, and discrimination is complicated by images of masculinity and femininity. When a similar number of men and women with disabilities are found in employment one is forced to question the role of double discrimination. From Morris's (1993) perspective, she argues that the images created by men with disabilities violate the traditional ideas of masculinity and consequently lead to more negative images. By contrast, although femininity and disability share some common elements, the traditional images of women as mothers, wives, and homemakers is incongruous with the images of disability. For this reason, employment is a marginally more acceptable role.

Double discrimination is also present when a person is both disabled, and very young or old. Without delving deeper into this topic, ageism was seen to exist as proportionally fewer employees with disabilities were in the under 20 or in the 50 and over age groups. This finding supports Barnes (1992) who reported that unemployment was greater amongst disabled people in both

of these age groups. However, discrimination on the grounds of age can be complicated by issues such as the onset of the disability, and the life expectancy of the individual. Arguably, the interplay of ageism and disability could occur at any age and be governed by the onset of a disability and the subsequent life expectancy of the individual. For example, a thirty year old who develops multiple sclerosis may have his/her life expectancy dramatically reduced, so that the disability in relation to the individual's age may have the effect of double discrimination.

There are several possible explanations for the very small number of Maori and Asian employees with disabilities. This may be a direct indication of double discrimination in that Maori and Asian people are more likely to experience discrimination if they are also disabled. Alternatively, there may be proportionally fewer Maori and Asian people with disabilities and consequently fewer actually seeking employment. Without figures to support the exact numbers of Maori and Asian people with disabilities it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions.

4.6.2. Policies and Legislation on Disability

There is a growing recognition that people with disabilities are discriminated against in the area of employment. The Human Rights Act 1993 which came into effect in February 1994 made it illegal to discriminate on the

grounds of disability. In addition to legislation, the issues which surround discrimination (on the basis of disability) are being included in equal employment opportunity policies (EEO).

Data for the present survey was gathered before the 1994 inclusion of disability in the Human Rights Act. Although the Act had been well publicised most employers appeared not to have given any consideration to the pending inclusion of disability in the Human Rights Act. In fact, only a very small number of employers indicated that they had any policies relating to the employment of people with disabilities. Of the employers who had equal employment opportunity policies on disability only about half had a written, formal policy. This suggests that disability is a low priority issue for employers. Employers with experience of disabled employees were the most likely to have some form of policy. It would appear that disability as an EEO issue is not widely considered by employers because little is known about discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The Equal Employment Opportunities Unit has presented several reports on the state of EEO for people with disabilities (EEO Unit, July 1990; EEO Unit, September 1990; Johns, 1991). In particular, the unit referred to what it meant to be a 'good employer' as outlined in the provisions of the State Sector Act 1988. Essentially, this is seen as a code of conduct for avoiding discrimination on the grounds of disabilities. The EEO Unit (September 1990)

report presented a list of guidelines on how to be a good employer based on the suggestions of the National Disability Advisory Council. Clearly, an important step in redressing the problem of discrimination is to have disability recognised as an EEO issue.

Attached to one questionnaire was a copy of the employer's EEO policy. The policy applied to all aspects of employment from recruitment and selection to training and promotion. Equal opportunity on the grounds of disability was said to occur when employment decisions were made on the grounds of ability not disability. The policy was expressed as follows: "regardless of any disability irrelevant to an individual's ability to carry out the job." A clause in this policy stated that the EEO policy was to comply with statutes such as the Human Rights Act 1993 and so the writer presumes that should the employer need to make accommodations these would be done in order that the individual could effectively perform the tasks of the job. There is no way of knowing whether this would happen but it highlights the need to clarify exactly what equal employment opportunity means for people with disabilities given the specific factors which arise when considering disability as an EEO issue.

The Human Rights Act has the potential to assist in redressing the balance against discrimination which is shown in employment towards people with disabilities. Two essential concepts of this Act are *reasonable*

accommodation and *undue hardship*. *Reasonable accommodation* places an expectation on the employer to provide equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. For instance, such accommodation would be the installing of a ramp for a person in a wheelchair. Against this, however, is the concept of *undue hardship* which prevents unreasonable demands being placed on an employer. So a small employer could experience undue hardship if he/she were expected to install a lift for an individual in a wheelchair. However, a lift may be judged as a *reasonable accommodation* for a larger employer.

The Human Rights Act 1993 is a significant piece of legislation for people with disabilities in New Zealand. In combination with other legislation it has the potential to attack the grassroots of discriminatory behaviour. The Health and Safety Act 1992 is but one of several acts which has a direct bearing on outcomes under the Human Rights Act 1993. In terms of the Health and Safety Act 1992 employers are expected to provide equipment and a working environment which are safe. Although employers have a legal obligation to provide a safe working environment difficulties can arise where they are not aware of the relevant safety requirements for people with specific disabilities. Under the Human Rights Act 1993 employers can not seek information on the individual's disability since such information could be used in a discriminatory manner to screen out potential employees. A further complication arises should employers use the Health and Safety Act 1992 as an indirect, but legal, avenue to discriminate against people with disabilities on the grounds of safety.

However, the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1992 does have a number of benefits for people with disabilities. One employer attached a copy of a survey on the Act which his company had conducted. Of particular interest were the measures the company had taken to identify and then deal with those potentially hazardous aspects of the working environment. Employees received ongoing training to prevent accidents and were also made aware of the most hazardous aspects of their environment. Knowledge of the specific areas of the working environment in which people were more prone to have accidents is one positive way to prevent future accidents, while at the same time ensuring that the employees' skills and ability are better matched with the limitations of the environment. Ideally, the most appropriate work environment is that which accommodates all people no matter what their abilities are.

The issues mentioned above are complicated and complex and will require a lot of time to be worked out. Sufficient to say at this stage that there is legislation in place which attempts to address the issues of discrimination against people with disabilities. It is too early to determine the effect of the Act but in the Human Rights Commission figures to the end of June 1994, discrimination in employment ranked as the second most important area of concern for people with disabilities, with eleven complaints having been lodged. Information on the actual nature of these complaints is generally not available to the public as the Human Rights Commission has a three tiered system for

settling complaints. What usually happens is that disputes are settled in the early stages and do not proceed to court. When a dispute does have to be determined by the courts then it is likely that overseas precedents will be referred to as there are few New Zealand decisions in this area.

4.7. Employment Statistics

Solving the high levels of unemployment and underemployment is fundamental to getting those with disabilities into employment that fulfils their potential. Although this study did not directly measure unemployment and underemployment it is reasonable to infer from the statistics that the levels are high, given that other New Zealand studies have found this to be the case.

4.7.1. Levels of Unemployment

In this study the level of unemployment was considered to be on the high side as there was an average of less than one employee with a disability per firm⁵. In other New Zealand surveys the level of employment among people with disabilities is reported as being 1.9 percent of the surveyed workforce (Kittingham, 1981; Bascand, 1987). In this study there appeared to be little

⁵ An exact figure can not be given as the questionnaire did not ask for specific numbers of non-disabled employees.

variation in the employment levels between men and women with disabilities. There were also very few non-Europeans with disabilities.

Employment levels appeared to vary depending on the disability. Proportionally more employees with non-traditional disabilities (with the exception of people with hearing impairments and epilepsy) were employed than were those with traditional disabilities. Bascand (1987) found a similar trend, with a larger number of employees reported to have asthma, arthritis or back injury but far fewer had spinal injuries. These results may reflect the fact that there are proportionally more people with non-traditional than traditional disabilities. Alternatively, it may be an expression of employers' attitudes towards people with traditional and non-traditional disabilities, given that employers are more willing to employ people of non-traditional disabilities. Of course there may be fewer people with traditional disabilities, with the result that employers are less willing to employ them as they know little about the nature of their disability.

4.7.2. Rates of Underemployment

As no data was gathered on non-disabled employees it is more difficult to judge the rate of underemployment. However, some comparisons can be made with other studies and with the information known about underemployment. In this study it was found that by far the largest number of

people with disabilities were employed in positions described as requiring the individual to have no formal qualification but on-the-job training of up to one year (New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 1990). The majority of people with disabilities were employed in clerical positions, and as sales and service workers. By contrast, the numbers of legislators, administrators, managers, professionals and technicians, and associate professionals were much smaller. These results support those found by Barnes (1992) who cited several studies in which more people with disabilities were in positions that required a lower level of skill than were the non-disabled. As was found in this study, Barnes (1992) observed that women with disabilities were more often employed in clerical and service sector positions.

There are other New Zealand surveys which have presented information on the percentage of people with disabilities employed according to their occupation. Bascand (1987) surveyed people with disabilities in the private sector and found that the majority were employed as production workers, transport and equipment operators⁶. Excluding this group of occupations, the next largest group held clerical positions, followed by service workers.

There are several different but possible explanations for underemployment. Had this researcher had information about the qualifications

⁶ Bascand's (1987) survey covered both service and manufacturing industries. This would account for the higher number of people with disabilities employed in the area of production, transportation and equipment operations than was found in this study.

and skills of the employees with disabilities a more direct comparison could have been made between their level of skills and their positions within their firm. However, what was noted was the attitude of some employers. A number commented that they had no suitable work for people with disabilities and several went so far as to say that they had few suitable lower level positions. It seems reasonable to infer that some employers consider people with disabilities are only capable of holding positions which do not demand a high level of skill or ability. Such an attitude may further deleteriously affect the employment status of people with disabilities.

4.8. Theories on Disabilities

A very simplistic dichotomous analogy could be applied to the theories of disability, with the individual theories at one end and the social theories at the other. The employment scene has been influenced by both extremes of the dichotomy. However, there appears to be a move away from purely focusing on disability from the charity and medical model perspectives towards a more socially defined theory of disability.

The medical and charity models of disability portray people with disabilities as dependent and functionally limited individuals. Employment options are limited largely to supported and sheltered employment rather than to competitive employment. Although competitive employment is more widely

recognised as the employment option for people with disabilities, employers frequently fail to make an accurate or fair judgment of employment potential. The high levels of unemployment and underemployment can, in part, be attributed to employers' negative attitudes and discriminatory behaviour.

The more recently proposed social theories of disability attribute causation disability to a failure within society rather than the individual. The problems experienced in employment by people with disabilities have their origins in the very fabric of society and the values it places on employment. Attempts are being made to redress the imbalance caused by the preferential treatment shown to the non-disabled employees as opposed to those with disabilities. The Human Rights Act 1993 forces employers to be more accountable for their actions and to develop more equitable employment strategies. Several employers in this study had included disability in their EEO programmes. The State Services Act 1988 provides guidelines as to what is appropriate behaviour for employers when dealing with people with disabilities.

The general direction of the EEO programmes is positive but the structure which underlies them is not as positive. In an EEO Unit report (September, 1990), disability was defined according to the WHO (1980) definition of impairment as an organic condition, while disability which is the result of functional limitations and handicap was seen as a social consequence. Several social theorists have rejected this definition as in essence it attributes the

problems of disability to the individual rather than social causes (Oliver, 1986, 1990; Borsay, 1986; Abberley, 1987; Hahn, 1985). This definition has the effect of limiting the potential of EEO programmes because it brings the problems of disability back to the individual. EEO policies in the workplace need to reflect a more equitable society, one which recognises the diversity of people and their own particular ability to manage their own needs. This will only come about when the environment no longer disables people with disabilities.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter the major limitations of this study are discussed, some possible areas for future research are considered and conclusions are drawn from this study.

5.1. Limitations

This study had several limiting factors. The extent of the research was curbed by both the limited time frame and financial constraints. The results of this study would have been further reinforced had it been possible to extend the research to different regional locations. It would be interesting to see what, if any, regional employment differences exist for people with disabilities. However, additional research would have involved greater financial and time commitments. As a result this study was confined to Christchurch and to examining only aspects of disability in the workplace from the employers' perspective. Although it would have been valuable to have had information from the disabled employees' perspective, this was not a realistic option given the constraints placed on this study. However, such information would have provided a more complete picture of the employment of people with disabilities.

A further limiting factor was the lack of in depth information on the individual's particular disability in relation to their position in the firm. Although it would have been useful to have had more detailed information, the broad overview obtained from this study provides a useful basis for more in depth research.

5.2. Further Research

There has been very little research on disability and employment in New Zealand. Further research could reinforce the conclusions reached in this and similar studies. As mentioned earlier, it would be useful to have information on disability and employment from the disabled employees' view point. More information on the general employment patterns of people with disabilities would also be valuable. Up to date data on the age, race and gender of people with disabilities, as well as their occupations, skills and level of education would provide an useful source of information for the future direction of employment programmes and policies. Ideally, such an information base would ultimately become superfluous as the environment became less disabling and equal rights for people with disabilities was an accepted part of life.

Of particular importance for people with disabilities are the recruitment and selection processes, together with the options for promotion/career development. There is definitely a need for further research in both of these

areas given the high levels of unemployment and underemployment. People with disabilities who manage to overcome recruitment and selection barriers are then likely to experience difficulties fulfilling their career ambition and employment potential. Research directed at discovering what lies behind this phenomenon would be useful, particularly when those with disabilities are considering entering the workplace.

1.5. Conclusions

The problems surrounding the employment of those with disability in the workplace are multidimensional in nature. People with disabilities experience greater barriers to the workplace because of the obvious physical limitations of the workplace environment, as well as because of the work practices, policies and the attitudes of employers.

In this study the employment experiences of people with disabilities were seen to vary according to the type, severity and visibility of a person's disability. Typically, there were more people with physical disabilities in employment than people with sensory-neurological, cognitive-developmental or behavioural-emotional disabilities which suggests that employers are more likely to show understanding towards certain types of disabilities. However, the severity of the disability was also a factor. Clearly some physical disabilities have a more profound impact on the individual making them more severely

disabled. Employers typically judged the employment potential of people according to the nature of the disability. People with more traditional disabilities were less likely to receive positive employment ratings from employers, the implication being such people would have more difficulties both in seeking and then in obtaining employment. Employment agencies such as Workbridge should identify and focus on the employment options for people whose disabilities are the least favoured by employers.

Of specific interest to the service industries was the visibility of a person's disability in relation to the position held. As expected the trend was for people with more obvious disabilities to be employed in positions which required less contact with the customers, clients or the public. This was often because employers did not want to lose business opportunities by employing a person who was visually less appealing and who could detract from the business's image. The apparent lack of acceptance of people with visible disabilities clearly presents a major employment barrier to people with disabilities. Despite having the necessary skills and ability, their career paths may be thwarted by an employer who is unable to see beyond the person's disability.

People with disabilities can also be oppressed by the workplace and the policies of employers. With so few employers actually having employment policies directed at those with disabilities it is little wonder that people with

disabilities face a wide range of employment problems. It is likely that many employers will only become aware of EEO for people with disabilities now that disability has been included in the Human Rights Act 1993. Although it is too early to tell what impact this Act will have on the employment opportunities for people with disabilities, the move towards equal employment is significant. As is happening in other countries, employers are increasingly being made accountable for their actions and behaviour, and are no longer able to ignore people with disabilities. Instead they are expected, when reasonably possible, to accommodate these people in the workplace.


It was found that, in general, employers with experience of people with disabilities were more receptive to employing them. A possible explanation for this is their prior knowledge and experience. They were also more prepared to make modifications to the workplace to accommodate people with disabilities and were prepared to spend more money knowing that the costs of accommodation would be off set by the benefits gained from employing that particular person.

The first major challenge to employment for people with disabilities is at the recruitment and selection stages. Besides having excellent personal attributes, the appropriate education, and relevant experience, employers also wanted information on the individual's medical history. This seems to reflect the notion that people with disabilities are ill and consequently not fit to work.

It has the potential to be a major stumbling block for people with disabilities when they come to seek employment. To counter this employers need accurate information about the employment potential of people with specific disabilities.

Employment options for people with disabilities will continue to increase as people with disabilities become more politically aware and actively demand equal rights rather than remain the passive recipients of charity. Although there are still many employment barriers for people with disabilities, these will reduce as employers start focusing on an individual's employment potential. Effective EEO policies and anti-discrimination legislation on disability will serve to reinforce this awareness. However, it is still unfortunately true that people with disabilities are too often further disabled by the many physical, attitudinal, and discriminatory factors which they encounter in employment.

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APPENDIX A:

QUESTIONNAIRE AND SUPPORTING MATERIAL



Department of Psychology

University of Canterbury Private Bag 4800
Christchurch New Zealand
Telephone: 03-366 7001
Fax: 03-364 2181

15th November 1993

Contact
Title
Firm
Address1
Address2
Address3

Dear X

As an M.A. student in my thesis year at Canterbury University, I am required to undertake some research. I have chosen, by means of a survey of Christchurch employers, to examine how and where people with disabilities are employed in the workforce.

I consider that my research is important because it will provide fundamental information about the current employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Such information is not available from the census or any other source. Despite the fact that the workforce is primarily employing non-disabled people there are a growing number of people with disabilities now entering into the workforce.

Your company was chosen at random from those Christchurch companies listed in the yellow pages. Although the choice to complete the enclosed questionnaire is yours, your participation would be much appreciated.

My research depends on the co-operation of employers without which my thesis will NOT be possible. I hope that you will be able to set aside the 10-20 minutes which I have found it takes to complete the questionnaire. I would appreciate it if the completed questionnaire could be returned to me, in the self-addressed envelope, by the 1st December 1993.

If you complete and return the questionnaire I will send you a brief report indicating the major findings of this survey.

The information you provide will be strictly confidential and my thesis will **NOT** identify companies.

I trust that you will give me the support that my research requires.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

Susie Studholme.
(Research Student)

Dr. Clare Lange.
(Supervisor)

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE

Questionnaire



DIRECTIONS:

Please read all instructions carefully.

The questionnaire should be completed
by the Manager or Personnel Manager.

There are three sections:

1. Company Information:

2. Employee profile(s):

Part A. Demographics

Part B. Employment

3. People with Disabilities in Employment.

Allow between 10-20 minutes to complete.

Susie Studholme
Psychology Department
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
CHRISTCHURCH

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is to be completed by the General Manager, Personnel Manager or person responsible for employees.

There are three sections to be answered as follows:

1. Company Information: questions 1-3. (YELLOW PAPER)
 - To be answered by ALL employers.
 2. Employee Profiles: question 1. (WHITE PAPER)
 - : part A: questions 1-4
 - : part B: questions 1-8
 - To be answered by employers who are CURRENTLY or have PREVIOUSLY employed people with disabilities.
 3. People with Disabilities in Employment:
 - : questions 1-6. (GREEN PAPER)
 - To be answered by ALL employers.
- Appendices:
- i. Appendix A: Additional Employee Profile form.
 - ii. Appendix B: Disability Categories (PLEASE READ THROUGH THIS BEFORE YOU ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS).

The questionnaire will take between 10-20 minutes to complete. Most questions simply require you to choose the most appropriate answer from a variety of options.

Please print clearly using BLOCK LETTERS.

If the answer requires you to place a tick (✓) or a number in the box and you select the wrong option, please cross out the incorrect answer and clearly write your new answer beside the box.

All information is STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Please return the completed questionnaire, in the self-addressed envelope,
to: Susie Studholme
Psychology Department
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
CHRISTCHURCH

Appendix B: Disability Categories:

1. Physical Impairment:

examples of conditions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. amputations | g. polio |
| b. arthritis | h. muscular dystrophy
(attacks muscle fibres) |
| c. back injury | i. paraplegic |
| d. cancer | j. tetraplegic (quadriplegic) |
| e. cerebral palsy
(disorder of movement & posture) | k. respiratory conditions
- asthma |
| f. congenital deformity of the limb(s)
(abnormal limb formation(s) present
at birth) | l. RSI |
| g. multiple sclerosis | m. stroke |
| | n. other, please specify |

2. Sensory-Neurological Impairment:

examples of conditions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. blind & visually impaired | d. epilepsy (seizures) |
| b. deaf & hearing impaired | e. spina bifida (spinal region has
not developed properly) |
| c. disease of the central nervous system:
- Huntington's chorea
(involuntary jerking movements)
- Freidreich's ataxia
(clumsy movement & slurred speech) | f. deformity of the brain
- hydrocephalus (enlarged skull,
'water on the brain') |
| | g. traumatic brain injury |
| | h. other, please specify |

3. Cognitive-Developmental Impairment:

examples of conditions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. Down's syndrome (mongolism) | d. mental retardation |
| b. fetal alcohol syndrome | e. metabolic and immune deficiency
disorders:
- diabetes; AIDS |
| c. learning disabilities:
- dyslexia | f. other, please specify |

4. Emotional-Behavioural Impairments:

examples of conditions:

- | |
|--|
| a. autism (poor communication & abnormal emotional development) |
| b. behaviourally-emotionally impaired |
| c. mental illness:
- psychiatric disorders: depression, schizophrenia |
| d. other, please specify |

QUESTIONNAIRE

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE.

Company Information.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION.

1. In what business is this firm?

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box(s).

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| - finance | <input type="checkbox"/> | - communications | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> | - personal services | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - social services | <input type="checkbox"/> | - community services | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - transport | <input type="checkbox"/> | - restaurant/hotel | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - real estate | <input type="checkbox"/> | - retail | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - other, please specify..... | | | |

2. Approximately how many people are employed by this firm?

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

1 - 20 ☐ 21 - 100 ☐ 101 - 499 ☐ 500+ ☐

3. Does this firm currently or has this firm previously hired any employees who are disabled?

Please circle the appropriate option.

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

If YES, carry on to the section titled: **EMPLOYEE PROFILES.** (WHITE PAPER)

If NO, go to the section titled: **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT** (GREEN PAPER).

If DON'T KNOW, go to the section titled: **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT** (GREEN PAPER).

For
Official
Use
Only.

☐☐☐☐☐☐

EMPLOYEE PROFILES.

ONLY ANSWER THIS SECTION IF THIS FIRM CURRENTLY EMPLOYS OR
HAS PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

For
Official
Use
Only

1. How many employees with disabilities are employed by this firm?

Number currently employed.....

OR Number employed in the past 5 years.....

PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN PARTS A AND B SEPARATELY FOR
EACH EMPLOYEE WITH A DISABILITY. ENCLOSED IS AN ADDITIONAL
COPY, FOR YOUR USE, IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE EMPLOYEE WITH
A DISABILITY.

Employee Profile: number 1:

Part A: Demographics:

1. Name of the disability

.....

FOR THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS PLEASE PLACE A TICK (✓)
IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX.

2. Age:

0 - 19 ☐ 20 - 34 ☐ 35 - 49 ☐ 50+ ☐

3. Gender:

Male ☐ Female ☐

4. Race:

Pakeha/NZ European ☐ Maori ☐
Asian ☐ Pacific Islander ☐

Other, please specify.....

Part B: Employment:

1. Name of the position this employee holds (job title).

.....

☐

2. What disability category is this employee?
(REFER TO APPENDIX B DISABILITY CATEGORIES)

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box(s).

Physical

☐

Sensory-Neurological

☐

Cognitive-Developmental

☐

Emotional-Behavioural

☐

3. Was this person's disability a result of a work related
accident which happened while working for your firm?

☐

YES

NO

If YES, how has the disability affected this employee's
ability to carry out the required tasks of
his/her job?

Briefly explain:

.....

.....

.....

4. On average, how many hours per week does this employee work?

☐

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

1-10 hours/week

☐

11-20 hours/week

☐

21-30 hours/week

☐

31-40 hours/week

☐

41+ hours/week

☐

5. Did your firm make any modifications to the workplace in
order to accommodate this employee?

YES

NO

If YES, briefly explain what modifications were made and
approximately how much the modifications cost.

modification(s).....

.....

.....
cost(s).....

6. What are the main tasks/duties for which this employee is responsible?

Please list as many as possible.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

7. Does this position require that the employee deal with clients, customers or the public?

YES

NO

If YES, then through which medium is this contact?

Please place a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the box besides the appropriate option(s).

- 1 = Always
2 = Mostly
3 = Sometimes
4 = rarely
5 = never

- a. face-to-face contact..... ☐
b. telephone contact..... ☐
c. mail contact..... ☐

☐
☐
☐

8. In comparison to non-disabled employees how would you rate this employee?

Please circle the number which most closely describes this employee.

- a. productive

always
productive

don't
know

never
productive

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐

b. ability to learn new skills

slow to learn				don't know			quick to learn
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

☐

c. level of absenteeism (beyond those days allowed for sick leave)

frequently absent				don't know			seldom absent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

☐

d. ability to co-operate with fellow employees

strong employee co-operation				don't know			poor employee co-operation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

☐

e. ability to follow supervisor's instructions

poor ability				don't know			good ability
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

☐

f. ability to communicate with fellow employees

good communication				don't know			poor communication
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

☐

Any comments.....
.....
.....

HAVING COMPLETED EMPLOYEE PROFILES FOR EACH EMPLOYEE WITH A
DISABILITY, PLEASE GO TO THE SECTION TITLED: PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT (GREEN PAPER).

EMPLOYEE PROFILES (ADDITIONAL COPIES).

ONLY ANSWER THIS SECTION IF THIS FIRM CURRENTLY EMPLOYS OR
HAS PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN PARTS A AND B SEPARATELY FOR
EACH EMPLOYEE WITH A DISABILITY.

SHOULD YOU REQUIRE MORE THAN ONE EMPLOYEE PROFILE FORM
PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM BEFORE YOU FILL IT OUT.

*For
Official
Use
Only*

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Employee Profile: number ____:

Part A: Demographics:

1. Name of the disability

.....

FOR THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS PLEASE PLACE A TICK (✓)
IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX.

2. Age:

0 - 19 ☐ 20 - 34 ☐ 35 - 49 ☐ 50+ ☐

3. Gender:

Male ☐

Female ☐

4. Race:

Pakeha/NZ European ☐

Maori ☐

Asian ☐

Pacific Islander ☐

Other, please specify.....

☐☐☐☐

Part B: Employment:

1. Name of the position this employee holds (job title).

.....

☐

2. What disability category is this employee?
(REFER TO APPENDIX B DISABILITY CATEGORIES)

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box(s).

Physical

☐

Sensory-Neurological

☐

Cognitive-Developmental

☐

Emotional-Behavioural

☐

3. Was this person's disability a result of a work related accident which happened while working for your firm?

☐

YES

NO

If YES, how has the disability affected this employee's ability to carry out the required tasks of his/her job?

Briefly explain:

.....

.....

.....

4. On average, how many hours per week does this employee work?

☐

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

1-10 hours/week

☐

11-20 hours/week

☐

21-30 hours/week

☐

31-40 hours/week

☐

41+ hours/week

☐

5. Did your firm make any modifications to the workplace in order to accommodate this employee?

YES

NO

If YES, briefly explain what modifications were made and approximately how much the modifications cost.

modification(s).....

.....

.....
cost(s).....

6. What are the main tasks/duties for which this employee is responsible?

Please list as many as possible.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

7. Does this position require that the employee deal with clients, customers or the public?

YES

NO

If YES, then through which medium is this contact?

Please place a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the box besides the appropriate option(s).

- 1 = Always
2 = Mostly
3 = Sometimes
4 = rarely
5 = never

- a. face-to-face contact..... ☐
b. telephone contact..... ☐
c. mail contact..... ☐

☐
☐
☐

8. In comparison to non-disabled employees how would you rate this employee?

Please circle the number which most closely describes this employee.

- a. productive

always
productive

don't
know

never
productive

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

☐

b. ability to learn new skills

slow to learn				don't know		quick to learn
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

☐

c. level of absenteeism (beyond those days allowed for sick leave)

frequently absent				don't know		seldom absent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

☐

d. ability to co-operate with fellow employees

strong employee co-operation				don't know		poor employee co-operation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

☐

e. ability to follow supervisor's instructions

poor ability				don't know		good ability
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

☐

f. ability to communicate with fellow employees

good communication				don't know		poor communication
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

☐

Any comments.....

.....

.....

HAVING COMPLETED EMPLOYEE PROFILES FOR EACH EMPLOYEE WITH A
DISABILITY, PLEASE GO TO THE SECTION TITLED: PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT (GREEN PAPER).

People with Disabilities in Employment:

THIS SECTION IS TO BE ANSWERED BY ALL EMPLOYERS.

1. Please consider **ALL** the disabilities in the **DISABILITY CATEGORIES**. Would your firm employ a person who has **ANY** one of these disabilities? (REFER TO APPENDIX B).

Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

- ☐ YES, my firm would employ **ALL** the disabilities (go to question 2).
- ☐ YES, my firm would employ **SOME** of the disabilities **BUT NOT ALL** of the disabilities (go to A and B).
- ☐ NO, my firm would **NOT** employ **ANY** of the disabilities (go to B).

- A. Which people with disabilities would your firm **NOT** employ? (REFER TO APPENDIX B, DISABILITY CATEGORIES)

Please circle the appropriate option(s).

- i. Physical Impairment

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n

- ii. Sensory-Neurological Impairment

a b c d e f g h

- iii. Cognitive-Developmental Impairment

a b c d e f

- iv. Emotional-Behavioural Impairment

a b c d

- B. Why would your firm **NOT** employ these people?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

*For
Official
Use
Only*

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--

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--

--

2. Does your firm have any written or unwritten policies regarding practices for hiring, promoting and/or laying-off people with disabilities?

YES

NO

☐

If YES, briefly explain the type of policy, how it operates and whether it is written or unwritten.

.....
.....
.....

3. Would your company make any modifications to the workplace in order to accommodate employees with disabilities?

Please circle the applicable option.

YES

NO

MAYBE

☐

If YES OR MAYBE, approximately how much money would you spend on modifications?

\$1-\$199

☐

\$200-\$499

☐

\$500-\$999

☐

\$1000-\$4999

☐

\$5000+

☐

4. How important would the following be when selecting people with disabilities?

Place a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 in the box beside each option.

- 1 = very important
2 = important
3 = minimal importance
4 = not important
5 = irrelevant

a. education.....

☐

b. experience.....

☐

c. ability to pass a medical.....

☐

d. personality/personal attributes.....

☐

e. age.....

☐

f. other, please specify and rate.....

☐

.....

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

5. What are the chances of career development/advancement for employees with disabilities in your firm?

Please rate each disability by placing a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 in the box beside the disability (REFER TO APPENDIX B).

1 = highly likely
2 = likely
3 = don't know
4 = unlikely
5 = highly unlikely

i. Physical Impairment

a	<input type="text"/>	d	<input type="text"/>	g	<input type="text"/>	j	<input type="text"/>	m	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
b	<input type="text"/>	e	<input type="text"/>	h	<input type="text"/>	k	<input type="text"/>	n	<input type="text"/>	
c	<input type="text"/>	f	<input type="text"/>	i	<input type="text"/>	l	<input type="text"/>			

ii. Sensory-Neurological Impairment

a	<input type="text"/>	c	<input type="text"/>	e	<input type="text"/>	g	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
b	<input type="text"/>	d	<input type="text"/>	f	<input type="text"/>	h	<input type="text"/>	

iii. Cognitive-Developmental Impairment

a	<input type="text"/>	c	<input type="text"/>	e	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
b	<input type="text"/>	d	<input type="text"/>	f	<input type="text"/>	

iv. Emotional-Developmental Impairment

a	<input type="text"/>	b	<input type="text"/>	c	<input type="text"/>	d	<input type="text"/>	e	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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6. Do you believe that your company is likely to employ people with disabilities in the near future?

Please circle the applicable option.

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

If NO OR DON'T KNOW, briefly explain why NOT.

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ANY COMMENTS:

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PLEASE CHECK THAT YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE RELEVANT SECTIONS.
You should have answered the following sections:

COMPANY INFORMATION: QUESTIONS 1-3. (YELLOW PAPER)
ALL EMPLOYERS.

EMPLOYEE PROFILES: QUESTION 1 (WHITE PAPER)
PART A: QUESTIONS 1-4 EMPLOYERS WHO
PART B: QUESTIONS 1-8 ARE CURRENTLY OR
HAVE PREVIOUSLY
EMPLOYED PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT:
QUESTIONS 1-6. (GREEN PAPER)
ALL EMPLOYERS.

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

APPENDIX B:

A LIST OF OBVIOUS AND NON-OBVIOUS DISABILITIES

APPENDIX B

A. Obvious/Visible Disabilities

amputations	muscular dystrophy
autism	congenital deformity of the limb(s)
polio	paraplegic
cerebral palsy	tetraplegic (quadriplegic)
stroke	multiple sclerosis
spina bifida	blind & visually impaired
traumatic brain injury	disease of the central nervous system
Down's syndrome	deformity of the brain
fetal alcohol syndrome	behaviourally-emotionally impaired

B. Non-Obvious/Invisible Disabilities

arthritis	cancer
back injury	respiratory conditions - asthma
RSI/OOS	
epilepsy	deaf & hearing impaired
mental retardation	metabolic and immune deficiency disorders: diabetes and AIDS
learning disabilities: - dyslexia	mental illness - depression

APPENDIX C:

CHI-SQUARE VALUES

APPENDIX C

A. Chi-Square Values for all of the listed disabilities

Values for the disabilities listed in table 3.11.

- i. Asthma $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 9.79, p < .01)$
- ii. Arthritis $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 6.94, p < .01)$
- iii. Cancer $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 2.00, n.s.)$
- iv. RSI/OOS $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 6.41, p < .01)$
- v. Back Injury $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 6.51, p < .01)$
- vi. Amputation $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 1.56, n.s.)$
- vii. Congenital deformity of the limb(s) $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 7.89, p < .01)$
- viii. Stroke $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 7.31, p < .01)$
- ix. Diabetes $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 6.37, p < .01)$
- x. Epilepsy $(\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 12.70, p < .01)$

Values for the disabilities listed in table 3.12.

- i. Autism ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = .54, n.s.$)
- ii. Mental Retardation ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 1.05, n.s.$)
- iii. Tetraplegic ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 1.05, n.s.$)
- iv. Behavioural -Emotional Impairment ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = .006, n.s.$)
- v. CNS Disease ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 6.01, p < .01$)
- vi. Down's Syndrome ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 5.1, p < .05$)
- vii. Traumatic Brain Injury ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 7.996, p < .01$)
- viii. Mental Illness ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = .59, n.s.$)
- ix. Blind/ Visually Impaired ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 1.30, n.s.$)
- x. Brain Deformity ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 6.97, n.s.$)
- xi. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 7.12, p < .01$)
- xii. Cerebral Palsy ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 3.4, n.s.$)
- xiii. Spina Bifida ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 3.8, p < .05$)
- xiv. Paraplegic ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 0.21, n.s.$)
- xv. Learning Disabled - Dyslexia ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 10.9, p < .01$)
- xvi. Multiple Sclerosis ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 3.71, p < .05$)

- xvii. Muscular Dystrophy ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 3.84, p < .05$)
- xviii. Polio ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 4.11, p < .05$)
- xix. Deaf/Hearing Impaired ($\chi^2 (1, N = 174) = 11.8, p < .01$)

B. The Formula used to Compute the Probably of Employing in New Zealand.

The table on which the formula was used:

Type of Disability	Employment Practice (experience)	
Employment Preference	YES	NO
YES	A	B
NO	C	D

If **not** significant: $\sum \frac{A + B}{\text{Total}}$

If significant:

- i. Compute graphic proportion for YES $\frac{A}{A + C} = P_E$
- $\frac{B}{B + D} = P_{NE}$

Probability of employment practice:

- a. experienced = P_E
- b. no experience = P_{NE}

- ii. Weight each proportion by the number of companies who employ/do not employ.

$$P_E \times \frac{(A + C)}{\text{Total}} + P_{NE} \times \frac{(B + D)}{\text{Total}}$$

C. Chi-Square Values for the Selection Criteria

- i. personal attribute (χ^2 (2, N = 167) = invalid as cell size was too small),
- ii. education (χ^2 (2, N = 165) = 1.58, *n.s.*)
- iii. experience (χ^2 (2, N = 167) = .24, *n.s.*)
- iv. medical history (χ^2 (2, N = 164) = 4.48, *n.s.*)
- v. age (χ^2 (2, N = 165) = 7.36, $p < .05$).